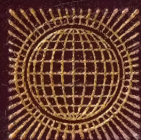
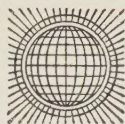


LITERARY
TREASURES
OF 1926



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INTRODUCTION

BY *Ray Long*

I N the final analysis, I suppose that in writing this introduction I am trying to be a salesman disguised as Santa Claus.

My associates and I are proud of *Cosmopolitan* and we want to convey to you the reasons for our pride. We feel that if we get you to read the magazine, you will, at least, appreciate the aims which guide us in putting it together.

What we are trying to do is to make *Cosmopolitan* not only the most interesting magazine in America, but the most human and amusing, and to make its appeal the broadest and most intelligent.

That's a big order. In fiction we strive to fill it with the stories of writers like Irvin S. Cobb, Edna Ferber, H. G. Wells, Captain John W. Thomason, Jr., Fannie Hurst, Ring Lardner, Peter B. Kyne, Rupert Hughes, W. Somerset Maugham, Owen Wister, Martha Ostenso, Kathleen Norris, H. C. Witwer, Arthur Somers Roche, Blasco Ibanez, and half a hundred others.

On the article and feature side, we have endeavored as conscientiously as we knew how to present honest accounts of how men and women have solved their problems of happiness, marriage, health, education, wealth, children, and the eternal conquest of environment.

As I suggested at the start of this little piece, Santa Claus in giving away books shouldn't try to

sell anything, but I do want to "sell" the idea that is behind *Cosmopolitan Magazine*.

We mean what we say about its editorial principles. We are not only putting together pages in an attempt to gain circulation—we are trying to find and publish stories and articles that people will remember and from which they will gain mental stimulus.

We are not trying to direct channels of thought; but we are trying to get readers to *think*.

The other day I had occasion to look back over a file of 1926 and I was so struck by the variety of the more than three hundred stories and articles we published during the year that I conceived the notion of getting out this book.

Almost at random I have chosen one item from each issue—with the exception of January, from which I picked two. I believe that these are just run of the mill, samples of what we have been publishing during the twelve months. We could fill a dozen books of this length, and each volume would be the equal of the other.

Perhaps if you have read this far you will understand the enthusiasm which causes me to call this book "Literary Treasures of 1926." I believe that any number of the pieces we published in *Cosmopolitan* during the past year are just that.

And now if you will turn the next page and read the first piece, which is Frazier Hunt's account of a day spent with President Coolidge and Mrs. Coolidge in the White House, you will find the elusive thing that I am trying to tell you about—the human spirit behind the magazine.

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A DAY WITH PRESIDENT COOLIDGE

By Frazier Hunt

I WANT to tell quite simply about a day I spent with President Coolidge and Mrs. Coolidge. It isn't easy to do because the most difficult thing in writing is to write plainly and understandingly about plain and unpretentious folks.

Mr. Everett Sanders, Executive Secretary to the President, telephoned me at my hotel in Washington late in the afternoon that Mrs. Hunt and I were invited to lunch at the White House the following day and then go to the World's Series ball game with the President and Mrs. Coolidge. We were to come to the White House a little before one o'clock.

At the door of the White House we were welcomed by the majordomo as if we were frequent callers. "Glad to see you again, Mr. Hunt."

He took my hat and coat and ushered us into a comfortable reception-room. He was gone a minute and when he returned, announced, "The President and Mrs. Coolidge."

Walking a little ahead of Mrs. Coolidge—as executive etiquette demands—the President crossed the room and cordially shook hands with Mrs. Hunt and myself. Mrs. Coolidge greeted us gracefully and smilingly. Then she introduced the two other luncheon guests—the Attorney General and Mr. Stearns, the President's personal friends.

With introductions over, the President offered

his arm to Mrs. Hunt and led the way towards the dining-room.

"The rest of us will just go along together," Mrs. Coolidge said with a smile.

So, chatting as if we were old friends, we crossed down the hall and into a large dining-room with a round mahogany table. The President placed Mrs. Hunt on his right, and Mrs. Coolidge directed me to sit on the President's left. The Attorney General sat on the other side of me, and Mrs. Coolidge between him and Mr. Stearns.

We bowed our heads and the President asked Mr. Stearns to say grace.

With general conversation resumed, the President turned to Mrs. Coolidge and asked where the two White House dogs were. She explained that they had been sent to their kennels so they wouldn't see us start for the ball game.

"That's right," the President agreed. And then to the rest of us: "You know it about breaks their hearts when we start in a car without them. And when they see bags being packed and realize they are to be left behind while we go on a journey, they make a terrible fuss."

For several minutes we talked about dogs and I told them about my boy's wire-haired terrier, "Rip," who likes to sit before the grate fire and nod like an old man. And each time he nods, he looks around to see if anyone is watching him, and then after several attempts to keep awake, he gives up the struggle and flops down in peaceful slumber.

"We had a wire-haired terrier one time but he was too high-strung to have around the house," the President said.

Then we fell to talking about the Middle West and the rich corn country around Galesburg, Illinois.

"Where was it we were going when we passed through Galesburg that time?" the President asked Mrs. Coolidge.

Finally they figured it out and then we got to talking about the American Legion convention at Omaha. "The Iowa boys were magnificent in the parade," Mrs. Coolidge remarked. "Each one carried a great tall corn-stalk."

"Tallest corn I ever saw," the President said.

"What's that song they sing?" Mrs. Coolidge asked. "Yes, that's it—'Out where the tall corn grows.'"

"We Middle Westerners are mighty proud of that country," I couldn't help saying. There were four New Englanders against my Hoosier wife and myself, so I had to make my little gesture of pride. They didn't mind it in the least; in fact, I think they rather enjoyed being twitted with friendly sectional brags.

The luncheon had got quite a way along by this time. Two colored butlers were serving—and I noticed that they always served the President first. The first two courses had been bouillon and crab meat baked in shells. Then came the real dish of the day.

It was fried liver and bacon. It wasn't cooked in any fancy Ritz way with rich sauce over it: it was plain, old-fashioned fried liver and bacon, crisp and well done.

I've been in pretty near all the countries in the world and eaten "behind" all kinds and grades of

cooks, but I don't remember ever eating plain fried liver and bacon anywhere else than in these United States of ours. To me it's pure American.

The President took only one piece but I helped myself to two. I hadn't had any for a long time and this was cooked the way we used to get it when I was a kid back in Indiana. And with it came creamed potatoes and buttered carrots.

We had apple sauce for dessert. That's another favorite dish of mine. And it, too, is an American dish I've never had in any other country.

The President asked me how the magazine business was and I explained that magazines were booming but that the book business was a little off. I added that I meant there was a slump in fiction, not in serious non-fiction books.

The Attorney General asked me what were my favorite books and I said the Bible and "Huckleberry Finn." Strange to say, none of the others had read "Huckleberry Finn" but they all were Bible readers. One spoke about the fine, old-fashioned habit of opening the Bible at random and starting to read where your eyes fell.

"I often do that," Mrs. Coolidge said.

"Senator Beveridge wrote something very fine one time about the Bible for every-day reading," the President remarked. "I think I have that upstairs in a book that he sent me. I'll try to find it for you."

Someone asked then what time the game started and when we had looked at our watches the President said: "We haven't much time to waste. I suppose we had better be getting ready pretty soon."

Luncheon was over, so we pushed back our chairs and again the President offered his arm to Mrs. Hunt and led the way out of the dining-room into a tiny elevator that takes you up to the second floor of the White House. Mrs. Coolidge took charge of Mrs. Hunt while the men followed the President to his study.

For several minutes he searched through the bookcases that half lined the room. "You know, they send a young man up here to take care of my books and after he gets through arranging them I never can find anything I want," he dryly remarked. "I don't seem to be able to locate that book of Senator Beveridge's."

But I didn't mind, because my eyes were feasting on the pictures on the walls—an oil painting of a low-ceilinged room in a plain Vermont farmhouse, with an old man standing by a kerosene lamp with a Bible in his hand, swearing in his son as President of the United States; a painting of horses and bobsleds in a Minnesota wood; a hand-colored panorama of rolling green hills with a tiny white village nestling in their midst—"The Heart of the Green Mountains" it was labeled.

The President slipped from the room and the Attorney General, who, like the President, is from Vermont, and I fell to talking of those flowing green hills and the quiet and sane wisdom they give to certain men.

I recalled then how last spring when the President's father was visiting the White House, the President was anxious that he should stay on and make his home there. Colonel Coolidge was an old man and not very well, and life would have been

more comfortable for him there. But spring was in the air and Colonel Coolidge figured that it was high time that he had his early peas in the ground.

The President might have pooh-poohed the idea of leaving for the sake of putting in a little dab of a garden. But he didn't.

For a half-century and more late April had seen early peas planted by the Coolidges. It was part of the order of life. And Calvin Coolidge understood.

Perhaps in the same way he understands a great many things about the peculiar problems that confront our country today—problems that to the outsider are as unimportant as the planting of early spring peas, but all a part of the very warp and woof of our national life.

And that may be the reason America trusts and believes in him—and, by the same token, that may be the reason he trusts and believes in America.

This is about all of my story. After we'd been in the President's study for a few minutes it was time to start for the ball game. The President and Mrs. Coolidge led the way in their car and the rest of us followed in another.

I noticed that Mrs. Hunt was wearing a heavy fur coat. She explained that Mrs. Coolidge was afraid she wasn't warmly enough dressed for the cold, windy day and had insisted that she wear one of her own coats. No one could be lovelier or kinder than this First Lady of the Land.

Incidentally, she understands baseball. She was carrying a leather purse with a season's pass fastened on the inside of the flap—a present from the Washington Club. And with a stub of a pencil she kept

score of the runs, hits, errors, assists and put-outs. The President was mildly interested.

Only once or twice did he have anything to say. In the middle of the playing he turned to Mrs. Coolidge and asked the time.

Carefully she looked at her wrist watch and answered: "Three-nineteen." Not "quarter after three," or "three-twenty," but the exact minute: "three-nineteen."

When the game was over and we were back in the White House and it was time to go, the Coolidges said good-by to us in the same friendly way in which they had greeted us. The President ordered that a car take us anywhere that we wished.

We'd had a good visit. We'd spent a day with real Americans.

I WON A SMALL FORTUNE IN STOCKS

By Fred C. Kelly

I HAVE just had the astounding experience of being up to my neck in the stock-market for fourteen months without losing anything. Indeed, I made almost a small fortune. It would have been a wonderful adventure even if I had lost—a combination of *Babes in the Wood* and *Alice in Wonderland*—for I had opportunity to learn of human nature in the greatest human laboratory.

Now that I have the good luck to be out not only alive and fully dressed, but with a tidy profit, I frequently get up in the middle of the night to congratulate myself. When I think of all that might have happened to me I grow goose-fleshy. I know full well that escaping with a profit was not due to intelligence on my part but solely because the Lord sometimes takes care of His children.

Looking back, I marvel at how green I was. I never even suspected that good news about a stock is likely to lower its price. Neither did I know that bad news may force prices upward. I had not yet found out definite reasons why men dabbling in stocks are far more likely to lose than to win. The important part played by vanity in stock losses was still a sealed book to me. Little did I suppose that danger of losing is greatest on Monday. Neither did I understand why men are inclined to sell their good securities and keep poor ones. When I saw prices at the lowest point for the day around one

o'clock in the afternoon I supposed this was mere chance.

What a lot I didn't know! I learned that men win or lose not so much because of economic conditions as because of human psychology. Why, when I had a profit on a certain stock, didn't I sell it? Why did I stand by and see my profit reduced as prices went lower and lower without ever offering to sell?

It dawned on me that my behavior was almost exactly the same as that of an old man I knew in boyhood. He had a turkey trap, a crude contrivance consisting of a big box with the door hinged at the top. This door was kept open by a prop to which was tied a piece of twine leading back a hundred feet or more to the operator. A thin trail of corn scattered along a path lured turkeys to the box. Once inside they found an even more plentiful supply of corn. When enough turkeys had wandered inside the box, my friend would jerk away the prop and let the door fall shut. Having once shut the door, he couldn't open it again without going up to the box and this would scare away any turkeys lurking outside. The time to pull away the prop was when as many turkeys were inside as one could reasonably expect.

I remember going out with the old man one day and seeing a dozen turkeys in his box. Then one sauntered out, leaving eleven.

"Gosh, I wish I had pulled the string when all twelve were there," said the old man. "I'll wait a minute and maybe the other one will go back."

But while he waited for the twelfth turkey to return, two more walked out on him.

"I should have been satisfied with eleven," the trapper said. "Just as soon as I get one more back I'll pull the string."

But three more walked out. Still the man waited. Having once had twelve turkeys, he disliked going home with less than eight. He couldn't give up the idea that some of the original number would return. When finally only one turkey was left in the trap, he said:

"I'll wait until he walks out or another goes in, and then I'll quit."

The solitary turkey went to join the others and the man returned empty-handed.

I think the analogy to the stock-market is close. When I had seen a stock go to \$80 a share, I was reluctant to sell at \$78. By the time it had sunk to \$75, I would gladly have taken \$77. When obliged to let go at \$65, I wondered what ever induced me to wait so long.

For a year or two, I had been amusing myself at odd times by reading analytical studies of the stock-market by such keen statisticians as Colonel Leonard P. Ayres, of the Cleveland Trust Company, and others. From these studies I had found out that stock-market fluctuations are not unlike the ebb and flow of tides. Like the tides, the general movement is broken into little intermediate waves, but there is an unceasing swing from high to low and back again. They are a little like weather, too. If you're experiencing the hottest day in several years, you may cheer up over the thought that it will surely be cooler tomorrow. Likewise when stocks are unusually high they are almost certain to drop.

I learned that it is of no value to know that a stock is comparatively cheap unless one knows also whether it is cheap on the way *up* or on the way *down*. As Ayres expresses it, "The man who buys a stock solely because of its seemingly bargain price is like a farmer with a thermometer but no almanac who thinks a hot day in autumn must be time to plant spring crops."

As a result of such reading I gradually acquired a willingness to risk money by buying stocks on margin. I had only the haziest notion of how this was done. With hang-dog air I went to a broker's office. The minute I was inside the door I glanced about furtively, fearing I might see somebody I knew. I couldn't have felt any more sneaking if the place had been a negro gambling joint. It seemed to me that everybody was secretly saying, "Another sucker has just arrived."

The broker courteously explained to me how one buys on margin. I was surprised to find that the margin required takes sudden jumps at arbitrary points. A stock selling for more than \$30 but less than \$60 a share requires a margin of \$10 a share, but if selling at \$61, the margin must be \$15. Having stock on a margin, I gathered, is a little like having a home subject to a big mortgage, but I learned this important difference: When real-estate values are temporarily low one is not asked to put up more money to protect the man who holds the mortgage against you, but with stocks I was compelled to give the broker a little more margin money whenever prices fell.

Having bought a list of stocks, I picked up the

paper that evening fully expecting to find either that the entire list had dropped enough to wipe out my margin, or that my broker's firm had suddenly gone into bankruptcy. Instead, I found that I already had a profit of nearly \$300. "Gracious," I thought, "how ridiculous for me to have engaged all these years in honest toil! Why didn't I strike this sooner?"

The next day I didn't wait for the newspaper to give the day's fluctuations but called up my broker every few minutes. I was already discovering how difficult it is to have stocks on margin and think of anything else. The young man who answered my frequent inquiries was so patient and obliging that I changed my notion about brokers' offices and decided they must be filled with professional lovely characters. I opened accounts with three more brokers! For a great truth had come into my life: If I buy stocks when they're cheap and sell them after they've gone up, I make a profit.

I wondered why I hadn't thought of that before. I also wondered why everybody doesn't do that very thing—buy at the bottom and sell at the top. To my astonishment I learned that perhaps 999 out of every 1000 investors do precisely the opposite! The fellow who buys low and sells high is so rare as to be almost a freak.

When prices are soaring the average man is convinced that the boom is just getting started and he begins to buy. Then when the tide turns, he thinks the setback is only temporary and hangs on. Finally, when financial pages of newspapers are full of discouragement, and stocks have touched bottom, he thinks the worst is yet to come and sells.

One of the keenest men in Wall Street told me that there are seldom more than two or three times in any one year when one should buy stocks.

"Of course, I wouldn't dare be quoted on this," he said, "because I work for a brokerage house and I would lose my job. But it wouldn't hurt our business no matter how often I published such good advice, *because nobody would believe it.*"

My own feelings confirm what he says. As I write these lines, stocks are perilously high. All rules of the game point to a decline starting almost any day. Yet I hear so much talk of large profits that I have an almost irresistible itching to buy.

If I dabble at stocks again I think I'll follow the practise of a friend of mine who never buys or sells securities until stock-market news reaches the first page of his newspaper.

"When prices are so low that they become a first-page news item," he tells me, "I know it is time to buy. Likewise, when prices have soared to such heights that the news can no longer content itself on the financial page, but is in head-lines on page one, I know that it is prudent to sell my holdings."

I found to my surprise that if a speculator is of a trifle more than average intelligence he is especially likely to buy at the top and sell at the bottom. Being more intelligent than the mass—though perhaps not intelligent *enough*—he has more than average resistance. When prices are dangerously high he stays out of the market, that is, he stays out at first. Only after prices keep going higher, until it looks as if there can be no stopping them, is he finally lured in. By that time everybody else who could be induced to do so *has* bought; hence prices

can go no higher. Having more resistance than the average works equally to his disadvantage in a falling market. If he grew frightened at the first unfavorable symptoms, he might save his profits or at least not lose much. But he says, "They can't scare me. Prices will turn upward any day now. I'll stay." Finally he does grow alarmed and sells, but by that time everybody else who is going to sell has done so and prices can go no lower.

Before I took my little flier in stocks I had supposed that a stock-broker probably knew something about stocks and that a good place to pick up information would be at a broker's office. But I soon found that it was dangerous to go near a broker's so-called board room where stock prices are posted on a large board. Every time my curiosity led me there, I let myself into a foolish transaction—bought or sold something unwisely. The reason was that I invariably heard and absorbed too much misinformation. Part of this came from brokers' employees, but the bulk of it was from other customers. Nearly everybody I met there had an important inside tip and nine out of ten were wrong.

I asked one broker, as we stood looking at the crowd of perhaps one hundred customers in his place: How many of these will get out of the market with a profit?"

"Nine out of ten will lose," was his candid reply, "because the first big sag in the market, no matter if only temporary, will wipe them out. No matter how conservative they are at first, carefully keeping reserve funds in the bank, they will soon have all available money up on margin and then they can't weather even a momentary reaction."

I had pictured stock-brokers as in the market over head and hands, but I learned that the average reputable broker not only doesn't speculate himself but doesn't permit his employees to do so.

I tried to find out why a broker knows so little about stock movements. The reason appears to be that he is not the type who would approach a job scientifically. He is usually keen-witted, besides being uniformly courteous and agreeable, and he has a gift for picking equally charming employees; but he is too close to unimportant or surface details to grasp in a broader way what is really going on. He can't see the woods for the trees. Moreover, a stock-broker ordinarily is not by nature a student. He works at high speed for a few hours a day and then sets forth in quest of diversion.

I might have made far more money if I had known as I do now how thoroughly undependable is advice in brokers' market letters. When the market was near its peak last February, many highly reputable brokers were strongly recommending the purchase of oil, railroad and other stocks. I have before me now the dope-sheet of one supposedly first-class firm forecasting a good upward movement in certain stocks just a few days before these stocks dropped ten points! Most brokers predicted a big boom in stocks, following the adjournment of Congress on March 4. Instead, a violent downward reaction began March 7.

After suffering from an episode or two of that sort, I went to a prominent broker and asked him why he put out little mimeographed sheets of advice to customers when he must realize that he is quite likely to be wrong.

"Because," he frankly told me, "it is necessary to keep business alive. Members of the human race are slow in coming to decisions, but the slight impetus they get from reading what a broker says may be enough to make them buy or sell when otherwise they would do neither."

After talking to those who have played the stock-market scientifically and successfully, I am convinced that the safest attitude toward tips is to reject them all. Even the good ones are bad—because you expect too much of them.

I wondered for a time why the talk I heard at the brokers' offices was so largely based on misinformation. Then it dawned on me: This is just our old friend, *the will to believe*! People accept a fact not because it's true but because they hope it's true. Having once bought inferior stocks—because of lack of knowledge or judgment to buy good ones—one is almost compelled to believe in the future of such stocks. Otherwise, the situation is so unpleasant that one shrinks from facing it. When a man declares confidently that a certain stock is going to advance thirty points, what he means is, "Oh, if it *only would*!" What sounds like an opinion, based on inside knowledge, is simply a hope expressed from time to time to bolster up one's courage.

Now, no matter how untrue a statement may be, after hearing it often enough one is inclined to believe it. Hence the danger of hanging about a broker's office and being exposed to so many seeming facts that aren't so. Sooner or later, the man who listens half unconsciously will act on such misinformation. He will buy stock on an "inside tip."

Perhaps my greatest shock of all was when I discovered what is well known to experienced traders—that good news about a stock may lower its price while bad news is almost equally likely to force its price upward. Last November I bought stock in a well-known company at \$57 a share. I saw it climb slowly but surely until one afternoon I was delighted to learn by the evening papers that it was $78\frac{7}{8}$ when the market closed for that day.

From the same issue of the newspaper I learned that the directors of the company had that day—*after* the stock-market closed—raised the dividend rate on their common stock from \$5 to \$6 a share. “Ah-ha-a!” thought I. “If the stock went to $78\frac{7}{8}$ *before* they raised the dividend, what will it do now?” I supposed it would go to 85 or more. The next morning the stock went momentarily a fraction higher, touching 79, and then it began to sag off. In a few days it was down to 76 and not long afterwards to 73. By this time it began to dawn on me that I had made a fool of myself in not selling at 78 or 79. But I felt lucky when I sold at 73, for the stock went under 69.

The explanation of a stock going down in price after good news now seems clear enough. Stock-market operators always anticipate forthcoming events. When a favorable action, long expected, has actually happened, there is nothing more in the immediate future to wait for; hence people sell their stock. This floods the market and the result is a lowering of prices. On the other hand, when bad news comes out, everybody thinks: “Well, all the bad news is now out, and this stock will not be so cheap again for a long time. Let’s buy it.” Since

the stock is now looked upon as a bargain it is in demand and, naturally, prices advance.

I was astonished to discover how dangerous in stock transactions is one's own personal vanity—probably the greatest single cause of stock losses. Men lose because of their unwillingness to admit that their judgment was wrong. They are reluctant to admit this even to themselves.

I discovered in myself an astonishing tendency when the market took a temporary drop to get excited and sell good stocks but keep poor ones. When I told a friend experienced in the stock-market about this, he assured me that it is a common failing. The reason is not hard to find. In an unfavorable market, prices of poor stocks that had been inflated beyond their value naturally go down most quickly. It may happen that one still has a small profit in gilt-edged stocks while suffering a loss in others. Whereupon one is likely to say, "I'll sell these that will bring me more than I paid for them and hold the others until they, too, show a profit." The consequence is that the thoughtless investor gradually gets rid of good stocks capable in the long run of pulling him out of the hole and nurses a bunch of sick babies.

More than once I watched a stock ticker and noticed certain stocks selling in increasing volume at higher prices. This I took to mean that men who knew about it were buying for further advance. Later I learned that the stock was being manipulated by a so-called pool for the purpose of giving exactly that impression to the unwary.

I inquired for details about how the trick is done. Those in the pool first accumulate blocks of a given

stock when it is still cheap. Then through one or more brokers' offices they negotiate sales of this stock at slightly increasing prices. These sales are really just to each other, and represent neither profit nor loss. But credulous men who see these sales recorded on the ticker tape begin to exclaim, "Look-ee here! There's evidently something doing in General Bootlegging Preferred. It's being bought in big lots." The public reasons, "Those who buy such big blocks must have inside information that a rise is coming. Let's buy now before the real rise starts."

When the public begins to crowd one another and bid for such stock, the price naturally advances. Members of the pool now cease selling merely to each other, but sell to the public. When they have disposed of their stock at prices beyond its value they walk quietly away, chuckling merrily, leaving the silly old public to hold the sack.

It took me some time to see just why it is that men are likely to lose money in the stock-market even when it is, in a general way, headed upward. The trouble is that instead of investing the most when prices are lowest, men go in timidly at first—because of gloomy news in the papers about business conditions—but become more enthusiastic as the market continues to rise, until when prices are at their height they are willing to risk almost everything. When oil stocks were at the top of their big advance last winter, I said to myself, "Gosh, I wish I had bought more. I must put in more money at once before the rest of the rise is over." Thus I invested part of my profits at the very peak, when I should have been selling. Luckily, I didn't reinvest

as heavily as did a friend of mine who made a small fortune only to lose it and along with it the savings of a lifetime.

He at one time had a profit of about \$20,000. In his imagination he had already spent the money, building a new home, buying a new car and sending his mother-in-law away on a tour which would keep her away at least six months. One morning he discovered that instead of having \$20,000, his profits had dropped to \$16,000. Now, even \$16,000 dropped into one's lap out of the stock-market is not to be sneezed at; but once having mentally spent his \$20,000, he did not like the idea of dropping back to a mere \$16,000. He said to himself, "Oh, well, the drop is only temporary. When it comes back I'll again have my \$20,000. To be sure of this I'll buy more stock and then only a small advance will give me my original profit."

But instead of advancing again, prices continued to drop. He now found that he must have far more stock than before to have \$20,000 profit on an average upturn of one or two points. That \$20,000, though only on paper, had become as real to him as if it were in his pocket and his imaginary investments, particularly those for pleasure, had become so much a part of his scheme of life that he thought he simply *had* to have it. So he bought still more stock. The fact that prices had been dropping should have been indication enough that the peak had been reached and that the toboggan had started down the other side. But his paper profit had obscured his vision. His profits dwindled to a mere \$2,000.

Somebody suggested to him that instead of wait-

ing for two or three points' gain in the next upward rally, he should buy a certain stock about to advance twenty-five points. In other words, he was lured into buying a highly speculative stock that could move downward as easily as upward. Ready to grab at straws, he quickly lost nearly all the money he had. Toward the last he believed any silly story he heard and he was lucky to get out of the market with the clothes on his back. Once again we meet our old friend *the will to believe!*

As an example of average speculators' determination to believe only what would be pleasant, instead of sensibly facing facts, I recall what seemed to me an astonishing circumstance. In March, when stocks were starting on their downward plunge, one brokerage house was able to foresee by a day or two the worst of the drop and urged all customers to get out of the market. But scarcely one in ten of the smaller investors took advantage of this advice. On the other hand, when this firm some time earlier had advised customers to buy stocks nearly all had responded. They *wanted* to accept that advice because if true it meant *more* money. Thus it appears that avarice is a more potent influence than danger. People are so optimistic by nature that they are not easily scared—not easily enough for their own good. However, once fear *has* been induced it works more quickly than does enthusiasm. Consequently stock prices *go down much faster than they go up!*

Looking over records of stock movements for the last twenty years, I was impressed by the fact that if I had made it a practise to buy a diversified list of stocks early in August and sell them in Sep-

tember, I would have made a profit much oftener than I lost. This seemed puzzling until I remembered that August is the vacation season. When about to go on a vacation a man doesn't care to have the stock-market on his mind. Not only does he wish to be free from worry, but because he is tired and in need of rest, business prospects don't seem any too bright and he is willing to sell his stock holdings for whatever the market offers. But when he returns from his vacation a month later, rested and optimistic, he is sure that business is in for a boom and he buys stocks confident of advancing prices.

I noticed, too, that even in a rising market one may usually count on a temporary slump between the 13th and 18th of December. Obviously this is because men are inclined to convert their profits into cash with which to buy Christmas gifts.

Many times I noticed that when the market was "selling off" the lowest prices of the day occurred at about one o'clock in the afternoon. A moment's thought made it clear that there are definite human reasons for this. Professional traders go to luncheon about one o'clock and do their selling before that hour.

Likewise, I observed that prices often take a sudden turn at fifteen or twenty minutes after ten—New York time—in the morning, because the stock-market opens at ten o'clock and about fifteen minutes are required to dispose of buying and selling orders placed the night before. When these are used up the market then behaves according to the latest financial or other news.

Several times when I was thinking of selling

stocks, I said to myself, "Oh, well, there's no hurry. I'll wait until the first of the week." Each time prices were lower on Monday than on Saturday. Then I began to wonder if there wasn't a tendency in any falling market for prices to be lower on Monday than on any other day of the week. I spoke to Colonel Ayres about this and it so happened that he had recently been looking into this same phenomenon. He had a chart of stock averages from day to day for three years. It was an enlightening record, proving beyond doubt that while prices may be still lower later in the week the greatest drop for any one day is apt to come on Monday.

I asked Ayres if this is because men sit at home on Sunday and fret about their stocks until they become fidgety and decide to sell the next morning.

"Not only that," he replied, with a shrewd twinkle, "but Sunday is the day that a man's wife has a chance at him. Picture an average American home Sunday morning. Father hasn't yet taken time to shave, though it is nearly noon, but is intently studying the financial page of his paper. His wife stands with hands on her hips looking at him, and finally says, 'Mortimer, those stocks are worrying you and I think it is time you were getting shut of them. Now you go down tomorrow and sell all you've got.' "

Ayres' chart showed another surprise. While prices are most likely to drop on Monday, they do *not* show any tendency to *advance* more on Monday than on other days. His investigation showed that in three years average stock prices advanced on Mondays a total of only \$40 but they declined on Mon-

days a total of \$74. Moreover, declines came *more often* on Monday than on any other day. Monday is undoubtedly the poorest day on which to sell but the best on which to buy. On the other hand, Ayres' study shows, price increases are most numerous and largest on Wednesdays. The least changes occur on Saturdays.

Now why shouldn't a man, after having Sunday at home, be just as anxious to buy in an advancing market as to sell in a falling market? Presumably because there is no danger of losing by not buying. The worst that can happen is simply not to make anything. Men are always more concerned over the prospect of losing something they already have than over not getting something they want. Tuesday, I found, is usually in sharp contrast to Monday. It is regret day. Men try Tuesday to undo their Monday mistakes.

One of my impressions of the stock-market, now that I'm out of it, is that the professional stock-operator must necessarily be either unscrupulous or else so hardened to what he is doing that he has lost all sense of human sympathy. His whole success lies in selling stocks to the public at prices so high that he knows they cannot long endure, while he himself expects to buy them at prices much lower. Those who pay these top prices and suffer losses are not in the long run men who can afford to do so. The great mass of the uninformed is made up of small investors to whom a loss of \$200 means a real hardship. Yet I imagine that the average operator never thinks of the personal hardships he is working on his victims. I can appreciate this because I found myself doing the same thing.

Of course, the game should be played *only* by those who can *afford to lose*. Those of us to whom a loss of a few hundred dollars is really vital haven't any business to be in the stock-market at all.

THE PATENT LEATHER KID

By Rupert Hughes

THEY called her that for reasons as evident to the naked eye as she was.

An inventory of her would have run as follows, starting at the top: an impudent patent leather cap; a frenzy of curls; a pitifully exquisite, pitilessly derisive, recklessly painted face; a child's throat; a slender-shouldered white torso submerged just in time (sometimes a little too late) in a bodice of patent leather, strapped over the shoulders, wrinkling about a boyish waist hardly slighter than the limber hips hidden by a flare of patent leather skirt; the mere beginning of a pair of trunks; a long hiatus of all costume; a pair of patent leather slippers.

The hiatus was filled by two of the nimblest imaginable legs, their knees of tremulous cream curdling and dimpling at joints so finely modeled that the beholder thought less of girl than of silken machinery or pliant jewelry.

The Kid danced wildly well in a shady cabaret where her only protection from herself or her company was the understanding that she was the special sweetie of the up-and-coming young prize-fighter "Curly" Boyle, known in the perverse accent of certain native New Yorkers as "Coily Berl."

The Patent Leather Kid's name—if you believed what she told you (which was always inadvisable)—was Fay Poplin. Where she got it no

one knew, but it was surely never from her mother or father—if she had ever had either. Still, it was the only one she used, and you could take your change out of it.

She had a wildcat inside the lithe, impossibly white body inside the glossy, flexile armor of patent leather impossibly black for all its flashing light. And there was a world of ugly wisdom back of the eyes that were, one minute, impossibly innocent; the next, intolerably wise.

Usually as restless as spilled mercury, Fay tonight might have been a statuette of marble and onyx as she leered across the table at Curly Boyle where he was attacking a beefsteak, and recounting the fight he had just won.

Fresh from the throb and peril of the ring, he described each lead, block, jab, with the fire, if not the vocabulary, of a poet. But Fay took it all with a bitter-sweet smile of contemptuous amusement. Now and then she would toss him a celery-top, in lieu of an ironical flower, or a sprig of parsley from the platter he was cleaning up. At last she broke right in on the climax of the knock-out punch:

“Boy, you sure are the gravy! There’s no denying it, for you admit it yourself; and you ought to know. But how come the newspapers keep saying your fights are all fixed and you only knock out set-ups?”

“Ah, who cares what the doity sheets say!”

In her face there was the meekness of a little girl lisping a prayer, but a she-devil’s malice in her drawl as she asked: “Say, Coily, just what is a set-up?”

He was good only at fist-repartee.

He countered feebly: "Ah, go chase yourself! You know dam' well what a set-up is."

"Do I, dolling? A guy was tellin' me that set-ups are has-beens or never-wases who get paid to stand up just long enough to be knocked out. But Coily Berl would never beat up a poor gink who was hired to lay down, would you, dear-ree?"

Curly rolled his eyes in helpless agony towards his manager, Jake Stuke, and Jake growled at Fay: "Ah, lay off him, can't you? Or I might pass you a poke in the jah myself!"

"Yes? And what'd mama be doin' in the meanwhile, pet? Wrappin' this chiny platter round your bald old bean, maybe. Say, what right you got to take a mortgage on a nice boy's life and toin him into a crook? Coily used to could lick all comers, but now he wouldn't dast bawl out that little Wop waiter without you looked him over, signed him up to lay down, and took the long end of the gate."

Jake almost wept as he pleaded: "Say! say! say! soft pedal that stuff, can't ya? Don't I know what Coily's got? Ain't I noissin' him for the champi'nship of the woild? Ain't I got him a clean record of eighteen knock-outs, se'm decisions and not one draw?"

Fay murmured with adorable wonder: "Oh, it was you that did all that knockin'-out, Jakie? It wasn't Coily, after all."

"Shut your trap, will ya?" Curly snarled. "Or do you want me to shut it for vou?"

"Anything from you is a gift from hev'm."

Stuke stopped Curly's fist on its way over the table, and tried to silence this Patent Leather gnat:

"Ah, wait ta minut, wait ta minut. Wha'd' you say, Kid, if I'd 'a' matched Coily up wit' some old vet'ran twicet his weight wit' twicet his ring-gener'lship, and he'd 'a' knocked Coily cold in the foist round of his foist fight? How about t'at, eh? How about it? If I'd 'a' did your way, he couldn't get into a p'liminary at the Y. W. C. A. Prize-fightin's a sci'nce; you can't loin a fella to be a champ in one lesson any more'n you can loin him to play the violin in one lesson. You're some dancer and I never seen nobody could shimmy like you can, unless it was a horse in fly-time. But you didn't loin that in one night, did ya? What if some of the sport writers do say Coily fights fixed fights? Look what they done to Lincoln! They shot him, didn' 'ey? And who was it got crucified? Or had you heard about 'at?"

There was a miserable wisdom in this; though, of course, Fay could never admit that Jake was right about anything; so she cooed: "Excuse me for livin', dearie. In my childish ignor'nce I thought a fighter was a guy who fought another fighter. I see it's somethin' like shadow-boxin'."

"Ah, say, what the——"

But she had heard her cue and was out on the floor doing her stuff while the saxophonists gargled and snored. The light darted about the patent leather surfaces of her costume, and dreamed upon her snowy flesh, while her ruthless little frame telegraphed messages of an insolence and audacity that could never be said or sung. But oh, how beautiful she was!

Curly glared at her with a passionate hatred. For everybody else he had a heart full of ice-water.

The only patriotism he had was his mad longing to be the champion of the United States and to beat down all foreigners. And everybody was a foreigner to Curly—a man from the Bronx or from Flatbush no less than an invader from remote New Jersey, Australia, Ireland, or any point west.

Then even such patriotism as he had was destroyed by the World War when it broke up Europe and fascinated America. For it hurt the prestige of all pugilists and shut off their future glories. In the public mind a combat with a single adversary on a roped platform presided over by a referee to enforce the rules, was contrasted with the exploits of martyrs in cloud-wrapt airships or ooze-invading submarines or in corpse-lined trenches, with the slaughter of tormented myriads, the crumbling death of cities and villages and the increasing woe of nations. The war was like a battle royal with the fighters blindfolded and nothing barred. If there was a Referee he never intervened.

When at last, with the rush of an uncontrollable mob, America joined the riot, Curly Boyle felt that his country had turned traitor. There was nothing but talk of volunteers, guns, ammunition, bayonet practise. The sacred word "fight" was diverted to the base uses of war. In the throngs about the prize-ring, uniforms were less conspicuous than ordinary clothes.

In the cabaret the uniforms made a wild uproar over Fay, and Curly could tell that their applause pleased her as she had never been pleased before. She looked as if she wanted to cry. Tonight when she came back panting and sank down at the table, she had forgotten her sarcasm. She said:

"Coily, I bet you'd look grand in khaki or a navy-blue low-neck. You're a hot dresser, but there's a soittain sumpin' about a uniform——"

"Yeah!" said Curly. "I been thinkin' about it. But I can't make up me mind which soivice to jern up with."

Jake Stuke raised a hand.

"Accordin' to our little contrack, Mr. Berl, if any mind-makin'-up is to be did, I do it. I do the brain woik and you do the fist woik; and right where I book you. Suppose you enlisted like a fool; what'd they do to you? Set you to peelin' a million pota-toes! Suppose you cut your t'umb off or get camp-sickness, or break your back; where are you? Supposin' you got into the trenches and come home wit' a crutch under each arm, if you had any arm to put a crutch under. They'd wave a few flags over you, and call you a coupla heroes, and then forget you. You'd be a lousy bum panhandlin' for poke-outs. No, sir, you stick to the woik I've laid out for you and leave the shootin' to the guys that's afraid to use their fists."

Curly nodded. "I guess you're right at that."

Jake grew magnificent: "Why, if they was any danger—like an invasion or somethin', I'd shoulder a rifle meself. But half o' these volunteers that's rushin' to the tailors to get into uniforms is simply stuck on their shapes. This patertism stuff is the bunk. It's like what Fay says: the uniform is becomin' and that's all there is to it."

"I guess you got the right dope at that," said Curly.

Was it a sigh of relief or of regret that slipped from Fay's lips? The veil of almost tenderness

in her eyes was gone, leaving them hard and bitter again. They softened only as she glanced about at the eager lads in khaki or blue blouses.

Curly knew those eyes of hers and jealousy choked him. All soldiers, sailors and marines were immediately added to his gallery of enemies. Gradually the public went plumb nutty, and began to call for the draft, compulsory service, a something they called universal conscription. If the act passed, everybody would have to volunteer whether he wanted to or not. Even Stuke was worried.

Curly wasn't afraid of nobody, but a guy hadda right to stick to his own specialty.

Fay, though, could not seem to get his idea into her solid ivory noodle. She was growing so warlike that she would rather dance with a soldier or a sailor than listen to Curly talk ring stuff. There was a funny look on her face all the time. Curly tried to knock it off once or twice, but it kept coming back. Especially when the band played "The Star-Spangled Banner." And somebody was always playing it. Go to a theater or a movie or a restaurant and you hadda keep standing up half the time. You couldn't begin to chew a potata but what the band would begin to bump the bumps with that old "O-oh, say, can you see by the dawn's oily light——" On the street you was forever tipping your hat to the flag as if it was a lady friend. Curly added the flag to his other favorite hates.

One afternoon when he was strolling along Fit' Avenya with Fay, for a little light exercise before the bout of the night with the Jersey Skeeter—the biggest man he had taken on yet—they were checked at a crossing by a regiment moving up the

street. There was always a regiment moving up the street.

The mob at the curb trod on Curly's toes with no thought of who it was they were shoving. When he was pushed out into the street by a gang of lunk-heads behind, two big stiff cops put their hands on his chest and used him for a battering-ram. And one of the cops sang out:

"Hello, Curly, where's your uniform?"

"Where's yours, you big bum?" was the best Curly could think of. Then he leaned out and looked down the line of the pop-eyed populace, and saw the hats spilling off as if a wave were breaking along the curb.

Another flag was coming along! A flag was always coming along! Curly eyed the leaning standards slanting north as the Stars and Stripes beat backward in a writhe of red and white and a twinkle of stars in a restless blue. He hated them so that he kept his hands at his sides and his hat on his head.

The bareheaded idiots around him stared at him in wrath. People muttered:

"Hats off!"

"The lid! The lid!"

Curly did not move. A stunted runt next to him had the nerve to say:

"Take it off before I smash it over your ugly mug!"

Curly's answer was a contemptuous elbow-jab that took the guy's wind and doubled him up. An old man, grizzled and tall, whispered over Curly's shoulder:

"Uncover, man; the flag is coming."

"Ah, to hell wit' the rag!" said Curly.

There was a movement in the crowd as if a snake were coiling to strike, and Curly made ready to learn these dubs who they were talking to. Suddenly his hat was whisked off by some unknown hand. Curly whirled and searched for it, but could not find it. Fay, who was standing at his side, had evidently not noticed the atrocity, for she was staring at the soldiers.

Just then the troops were checked by some jam ahead; and people waiting to cross the street made a dash to pass between the platoons marking time. Fay caught Curly's arm and urged him forward. He was swept across, looking frantically for his hat among the hurrying feet.

There are few things as sacred to a man as his hat and Curly was in a mood to assault the whole town when Fay said: "Here's your bonnet, dearie." She glanced at his fist. "Don't waste that mallet on me, boy; save it for the Skeeter."

Curly snatched the hat from her hand, jammed it on his head and struck out for his training-quarters, leaving her flat. When he turned to see if she were following, she was gazing at the soldiers, whose bayonets flowed beyond the heads of the witnesses in a long saw-blade of steel.

All this put Curly in high spirit for the bout. The Jersey Skeeter had more height and weight and a three-inch longer reach than Curly, but only courage enough to submit for a few dollars to the brief death of a knock-out. It had been agreed that the fight was to go four rounds before the Skeeter took the count; but Curly was so furious that he forgot his instructions, and went right after the Skeeter

with that low menacing prowl of his, brushed aside the Skeeter's hands with his open left glove and drove his right to the chin with a zing that rocked the Skeeter's head almost to sleep, and woke the crowd to frenzy.

The Skeeter fell into a clinch and mumbled: "Hey, whatta hell? Easy on dat stuff."

Curly flung him off and almost dropped him with a blow to the heart. The Skeeter went into another clinch and Curly smote him over the kidneys so hard that he straightened with a yowl, only to be doubled up with a jab in the pit of the stomach.

Curly soon had the Skeeter so cock-eyed that only the bell saved him. Stuke and Molasses whispered to Curly to slow up and ease along till the fourth round or he'd have a dead man on the canvas.

The second was so stupid that the crowd grew rabid as the two men fanned the air, fell into clinches until the referee pried them apart; whiffed, danced and embraced. The referee did all the work and the crowd howled.

"Say, whyn't you kiss each other?"

"Give the poor beezer an ice-cream cone, sweetheart."

"Nah, make it a cream-puff apiece."

Curly could not endure ridicule and he sent the Skeeter cowering against the ropes, trying to cover himself in a dozen places with two useless fists. The magnificence of Curly's shoulder-blades rippling and glistening in the downward flare of light, and the pure mechanical beauty of his jabs and uppercuts, filled the stodgiest spectator with a sense of beautiful efficiency. The many-voiced had one voice.

"Put him out!"

Curly glanced inquiringly at Stuke, and Stuke, afraid of the crowd, nodded and called through the ropes, "Give him all you got, boy!"

With his left hand, Curly set the head of the Skeeter in just the position to knock it off, drew back that right meat-ax of his, and—a regiment marched by! The band played "The Star-Spangled Banner." There was a racket of people getting to their feet; then a hush of attention.

Curly paused to think up a proper curse. The Skeeter, glancing between his gloves, saw that Curly's jaw had sagged and his hands had dropped. The much abused Skeeter could not resist the chance. Curly was sitting too pretty.

The Skeeter made a sledge-hammer of himself and caught Curly just below the inverted V of his ribs. As Curly crumpled the Skeeter's right hand came up from the floor, met the point of Curly's jaw, slammed it shut and jarred off every nerve in his head.

Flop went Curly, knocked out twice at once. Before his soul could get back into his body the sexton's fatal forefinger was beating the death-knell over him, and chanting "Six! Seven! Eight!"

By the cry of "Nine!" Curly had forced one paralyzed arm to action and heaved his two-ton weight up to his left elbow. At "Ten and out!" he had his right palm on the canvas and was prying his other shoulder out of the ground where it had taken root. His head came up as if it were made of lead and his eyes were pitiful with fog and wonder.

He could hear faint sounds of cheering several miles away and the next thing he knew was his

dressing-room, with his black sparring partner and his fat adorer, Puffy Kinch, working over him; and Stuke trying to look like a good loser. 'Curly tore off his gloves and sobbed and wailed as only prize-fighters can weep. His three disconsolate retainers tried in vain to console him. Stuke was kind enough to say: "Now that you know how it feels to be knocked out, you'll be all the better for it."

But the Skeeter gave him the only comfort he could accept. The Skeeter put his head in to apologize and Curly, with a howl of joy, dragged him in, beat him senseless, and kicked him out. Then he wept again. He outwept his own shower-bath.

He would not have gone to the cabaret where the Patent Leather Kid always waited for the good news, but he hardly dared let anyone else tell her how it came about. When he arrived she was dancing with a tipsy young lieutenant, who hugged her so tight that the two ensigns who dogged their steps could not cut in.

Fay danced the uniform toward Curly and hailed him. "Hay, Coily, how many rounds did he last before you handed him his K. O.?"

"Ah, to hell wit choo!" snapped Curly.

"Oh, I say," said the lieutenant, "I can't have that, you know."

"Then you can have that!" said Curly, and pasted him one that sent him into the orchestra, where the saxophones emitted a dying squawk. The ensigns fell on Curly, and he said: "Split that between yous!" as he handed them a left and a right, zing-zing!

Fay caught his arm. He gave her a back-hander that slammed her across a table into a wall. It took

two waiters to relieve her of the sharp knife she seized with a sincere promise to lose it in Curly's black heart.

As all the soldiers, sailors and marines massed to avenge the uniform, Stuke and Puffy Kinch dragged Curly away.

The next morning as his bitter eyes ransacked the newspapers he found little but military and naval mention, and only one scant reference to himself:

Something must have gone wrong with Jake Stuke's Curly Boyle last night. He was completely upset by his own set-up. The pitiful Jersey Skeeter stopped the pitiful four-flusher in the second. If Mr. Boyle still believes that he is a fighter, let him take himself to France, where all the important American fighting will be done until further notice. Since he has never been tempted to volunteer, it is to be hoped that the draft act will catch him.

It did.

Stuke bribed a physician to certify that he had a weak heart on the same day that a more patriotic citizen bribed the same physician to certify that his weak heart was sound. The patriotic citizen had the pleasure and honor of dying of heart-disease during a great battle, and Stuke had the pleasure of holding down a swivel-chair on a draft board.

Puffy Kinch made a noble effort to evade the sleuth-hounds of the draft, but when he took his final refuge under a bed, he was so fat that his amused pursuers stood a while and watched the mattress breathe.

Stuke arranged to have Curly assigned to the important post of physical instructor to the Boy

Scouts, but when he told Fay of his good luck, her laugh of cold scorn dazed him. He gasped: "Say, sa-ay, what's bitin' you that you got such a itch to get me moidered by the Joimans? The Kaiser never done me no doit."

She stared at him, shook her head feebly, broke down crying and ran away.

She sent him a note.

Curly dearie: I couldnt fight, I couldnt be a train nurse, I couldnt be a stenographer but when I toled them I could dance they says go on over to france and dance for the boys so I am on my way. Dont worry I am taking your place so take good care of your precious self so no more at present from if I don't see you any more hello
Fay

Curly crushed the note in his fist, and consigned Fay to his overcrowded private hell. Then he went to the draft board and asked to be shipped to France—not to spite the Kaiser, but the Patent Leather Kid.

In the training camp he met Puffy Kinch, who was in the same brigade and served as a splendid press-agent. Curly was soon the champion boxer of the whole division. But on the transport he was not so good. His stout stomach had been his mainstay and it betrayed him—incessantly. He was already licked to a standstill when he reached France.

At the sight of the first wounded men, his courage took another K. O. Every man has his pet cowardice and a bullet was Curly's. He confessed to Puffy: "Them human remnants have got my

goat. I can't get 'em out of my system. I'm all in already. I didn't know they was as much yella in all the woild as I got right now."

Puffy suffered for him and with him, but their terror was like their seasickness: the ship had not stopped on account of Curly's nausea; the army marched him on for all his reluctance. It marched him straight to Fay Poplin.

This was not so strange since she had begged to be sent to the billet where the New York draft troops would be sent. All the while he was in the training camp, she had been dancing in Paris with everybody that asked her to—soldiers on leave, soldiers on the way up, soldiers stationed there for administration work.

But her longing was for the trenches. She had always had the adventurous heart and she wanted to do her bit for the boys who were about to die, or who had returned from the dugouts for a respite before they went back into the mud.

When she learned where the draft regiment was stationed, she exerted a little unfair influence on one of her countless suitors and had herself forwarded to the Y. M. C. A. hut. There on the same ball-room floor with her were an English duchess, two French comtesses, and various American aristocrats who wore themselves out in the arms of shagbark soldiers of every sort, many of them all too fresh from the delousing machines; many of them apparently delayed on their way thither. But everything hideous, ridiculous, incredible, inconceivable was sanctified if it helped to cheer the soldiers. No sacrifice was too great for the great god Morale.

Here was a girl of Fay Poplin's type dancing

under the auspices of the Y. M. C. A.! The Y itself had dazed itself by embarking in the tobacco business and giving out cigarets in place of tracts. Then it had turned its chapels into public dance-halls and substituted jazz for hymns. Day and night the sacred priestesses spun about the spinning soldiers. They rested only on Sundays.

Then they saw that when the lonely soldiers found the ballroom closed on Sundays, they simply drifted "down the line." And so the Y. M. C. A., as the lesser of two evils, gave dances on the Sabbath!

The footsore Duchess exclaimed: "If the war lasts much longer, the Lord only knows what they'll make of us!"

Fay was afraid of nothing but her feet. Her poor "dogs," swollen, bruised from the tread of many a hobnailed boot, threatened to die on her. Hundreds of soldiers twirled and pursued her over thousands of miles of distance and it seemed that everybody in the division took her into his arms except Curly Boyle.

She could not be sure that he was with the army, but she always hoped and was forever asking, "Do you happen to know a boy named Coily Berl?"

Even those who knew Curly Boyle did not know his name in that dialect. Lieutenant Hugo Breen, who was in command of him, failed to recognize the name when Fay asked him her old question. But he recognized that Fay was the most delicious armful he had ever dandled and he came every evening to tote her round the floor.

He found her so peaked and jaded one Sabbath night that his pity grew dangerously tender. "It's

a crime to keep you on your feet. Come out in the moonlight and rest."

She shook her head and glanced along the line of homesick, dance-hungry, girl-famished soldiers edging the floor.

"Look at the poor boys that may never dance again! They're goin' out to die, maybe, and I got a right to die for 'em. I got an ambish too. I'm keepin' track of my distance and it won't be long now till I've danced my twenty-fi' thousandth mile. Then I'm goin' to call it a day."

So she danced on and on until she actually fell asleep in Hugo's arms.

If she dreamed of Curly, she never dreamed that he was watching her now. He and Puffy had steered clear of everything bearing so respectable a label as the Y. M. C. A. and had studied French among the living dictionaries in the native quarters.

But on this quiet Sunday they had been attracted by two pretty things of evident American stock. The girls had such a come-along look in their eyes that Curly and Puffy followed them and overtook them at the hut, where the two scouts flung back their capes and revealed their uniforms. Having decoyed Curly and Puffy into this safe environment, they invited the lads to dance.

"Nobody can't sting me twice in the same place," said Curly. "I bet your goils can't dance for sour apples."

The benevolent sirens found other soldiers more willing and Curly and Puffy lingered in the outer darkness watching the merry-go-round. Suddenly Curly gripped Puffy with a vigor that had him yowling, and gasped:

"Sweet cheese! Lookit!"

It was the Patent Leather Kid dancing with some shavetail who kept his head so close to hers that Curly could not make him out as his own lieutenant. Nor could Curly understand that his own wrath was jealousy.

Just then Hugo Breen realized that Fay was actually slumbering in his arms, walking in her sleep. So he danced her into the blue air, brushing aside the envious witnesses. He had her almost out of ear-shot of the music before she woke, as startled as if she had fallen out of bed. When she realized where she was she gasped: "I gotta get back!"

Breen kept his arms about her and told her how adorable she was, and how pitiful. He begged her for a kiss. So many men had taken her kisses with or without the asking that she laughed drowsily and put up her pretty mouth.

Before the enchanted Hugo could accept the gift, a big hand was thrust between his lips and Fay's, and he received instead of a kiss a slap in the face that swept him back and tore his hands from Fay.

She opened her eyes. Curly! Her first thought was one of delight that he was in uniform and in France—but not for long, it seemed, since Hugo had already whipped out his pistol. He would have emptied it into Curly, too; if Fay had not seized his hand and spread her fingers over the muzzle.

Puffy almost swooned when he saw that Curly had struck his own lieutenant in the face, but Curly was too blind to care. Puffy held his terrific left arm and his more terrible right, while Hugo checked his own fury for Fay's sake, put up his pistol and mumbled:

"Boyle, I could shoot you for this, or have you shot. But I'll let you live in the hope that you'll stop some German bullet that might have killed a decent man."

Curly sneered at such magnanimity and took it for cowardice. Then he turned on Fay and reviled her with such names that a squad of her admirers fell on Curly, and Hugo had to save him from being beaten to death.

The next morning Curly woke up battered and defiant, calling himself a sucker, a set-up, a plain fall-guy for this war-stuff. But he could not buck his corporal, his sergeants and his officers; and Hugo ran him raw for his own good and the good of the service, while Curly's hatred smoldered and ate deeper into his soul.

Of evenings he hung infatuated outside the hut watching Fay flit from soldier's arms to soldier's arms, and fuming with wrath at Lieutenant Breen's proprietary way of holding her and murmuring to her.

Sometimes a woman has more reasons than one for snubbing a man, but when Fay first gave Curly the icy eye and the shoulder-blade after he had called her all those names, he could only imagine that she was sore at him for putting her where she belonged. So he made no effort to force a reconciliation.

He took his rage out on Breen, with a subtlety of insolence impossible not to recognize and impossible to specify. It was a hard position for both natures: Curly had to knuckle under to a man he could whip with one hand; Breen had to bear the mean looks of a subordinate.

Curly was a fierce individualist and punishments drove him to mutiny. Breen was a fanatic patriot and felt it his highest dignity to forget his dignity in the name of the service. After all, Curly Boyle was one more rifle, one more bayonet, one more stop-gap.

And Fay, who was on fire with patriotism, who admired Breen and both loved and loathed Curly, succeeded only in keeping them in a humor of mutual murder. Curly grew so difficult that Breen rejoiced at an unexpected solution of the problem of what to do with him.

The regiment was joined by a platoon of tanks, Renault tanks just up from Langres, where American troops had studied the use of them as American troops had to study the use of all the French and British war material, since their own country had none of it ready.

These tanks were not the great baggage-cars of the English type that startled the Germans one day like a herd of elephants breaking from the jungle. The Renaults were called "rhinos," mere whippets. They weighed only a matter of seven tons apiece and carried only a chauffeur and a gunner, in addition to their engines, their gas and their ammunition.

The tanks fascinated the infantry. Puffy had to wedge into the first one he saw, and he filled it to overflowing. Breen called out:

"Sergeant, take that crowd out of there. Get a can-opener and squeeze him out before he swells up and busts."

The sergeant needed Curly's help to pull Puffy through the narrow door, and the sergeant sighed:

"Fat boy, you're just naturally too big for this little war."

Only the day before Puffy had got stuck in the elbow of a communication trench during the rehearsal of a battle and had caused the technical destruction of a whole platoon. Curly doubled Puffy up with a playful jab and made to step into the tank to give it the once-over, but Breen drawled:

"Sergeant, keep Mr. Boyle out of there. He's so careless with his big fists that he might break something. But since he and Kinch are so fond of tanks, I've found at last the very job they're looking for. Assign them both to the squad of tank-nurses."

When he found out what this new dignity meant, Puffy had to explain it that night to the English duchess, who had found him the drollest of dancing-partners.

"Well, your Duchessship, whadda ya suppose I and Coily Berl have been p'moted to?"

"I can't imagine. Do tell me."

"We've been raised to tank-noisses."

"Tank-nusses? Fancy! And whatever might they be?"

"It's a great honor. We don't have to ride in the doity old busses, thank Gawd; the air in them things is stuffy and the noise would bust your ears. All we gotta do is walk along outside and take care of 'em—pick off snipers and things."

The duchess surprised Puffy by a view of the matter that his slow brain had never thought of.

"But I say! I should fancy it would be far more dangerous outside the tanks than in. What if—while you are picking off the snipahs, the snipahs should pick you off—if you know what I mean?"

"I know just what you mean, Duchess. I get you poifeck. But o' course—well, if the snipers snipe us, I guess we just gotta be sniped."

"Indeed yes! I guess also—quite!" said the duchess.

Curly had not been so thick as Puffy. His training had quickened his imagination and taught him to foresee and duck danger. His fame and his prowess as a pugilist made him unashamed of his cowardice as a soldier.

The moment Breen got rid of him by assigning him to "outdoor" duty, he saw just what it would mean to dog one of these steel brutes under the storm of fire that would rattle off their thick hides.

His wrath grew blacker as his liver turned whiter. He solemnly resolved to escape from the ordeal if he had to win his discharge by shooting off one of his own fingers. He set the muzzle of a pistol against his left forefinger, but could not bring himself to pull the trigger.

He decided instead to lift his hand above the parapet of the first fighting trench he visited and let the enemy slice it for him.

He was so sick with a disease of cowardice that even Puffy began to bully him.

"In the first place, there ain't goin' to be no trenches for us tankers; in the seckin' place, for the love o' Mike, quit braggin' about how brave you ain't—or they'll give you a medal for it."

With the abruptness of a bomb from a Big Bertha, the order came for the division to advance into action. The tanks trundled right alongside the platoon commanded by Hugo Breen, who made it his business to keep an eye on Curly.

The blundering behemoths crept along the night-weird roads, through villages like ruined graveyards, as if primeval times had come again and prehistoric reptiles crawled toward some Mesozoic encounter.

Curly had not spoken to Fay since he reviled her at their first meeting outside the hut, but Hugo Breen had bidden her many a good-by, his only comfort the thought that he left her far from the perils he embraced.

But the division had hardly crossed the horizon before the village was thrilled with the visit of a troupe of American players, actors and actresses from the legitimate, and vaudeville stars from the—illegitimate?

They brought Broadway to camp; but for one night only since they were on their way right into the danger zone. Fay implored them to take her along, told them lies about her fame as the Patent Leather Kid, and, when they were politely skeptical, insisted on proving her quality, pleading:

"I had a hunch to bring my woikin'-clothes along. Just lea' me duck into 'em and do my stuff once. See my act and then let your conscience be your guide."

She sped to her tent, took from her camp trunk the varnished costume, caressed it, ducked into it, ran back through the streets and onto the stage they had improvised in a broken church.

There was no resisting her beauty, her tantalizing allure, and the overwhelming pathos of her feeling that dancing was her one expression, her sole oratory of a seething patriotism.

The manager had only one protest left: "You're

too pretty, my dear, to be risked. One airplane raid and—well, your patent has expired. Stay here and jazz along with the boys in this billet.”

“I’d rather a bomb hit me! I’ve figured it out that I’ve one-stepped as far as once around the globe. Ain’t that enough for one pair of dogs? Gawd, but I’d like to dance alone for a while.”

“All right. Come along and if a shell hits you well, you’ve earned your rest.”

The troupe moved on in racing cars and set up shop wherever there were troops to entertain, either before or after taking the stinking medicine of the trenches.

Curly’s division drew up at length to the brink of the volcano under cover of night—at least they called it “night,” though the pitch-black gloom was torn to shreds with rain like blood and fire in the rip and split and spatter of star-shells and the shattering zoom of big ammunition feeling out the secret places.

The mud here was almost too much for the slithering tanks, but it was worse for the poor nurse, who must skip and leap and flounder in the fumes of gasoline and clamber through the branches of the trees the tanks bore down, and the barbed wire that whipped up in their wake.

In the mangled forest of their last resort, the tank crews set to work with frenzy to tune up their engines, their guns, their caterpillar tractors. But Curly had nothing to do except listen to the dog-weary Puffy’s snores and nurse his grouch and his blue funk.

The dank woods reeked with fog and pockets of stale gas and were nauseous with the garbage of the

human slaughter-pen. Hundreds of men had been chopped to mince-meat here and never buried and their ghosts whispered to Curly:

"It won't be long till you jern up with us."

When the fatal moment came to advance, Curly's morale was at the absolute zero. His tank moved off and left him, and he thought of the lumbering, yawning Puffy as a fool hound heeling a car of death.

He could not budge until the nose of the following tank bunted him over. Only a swift wriggle saved him from being ironed into a flat pulp by the caterpillar rollers. He lay panting a moment to watch them pouring in a hideous cascade that ran to the rear, climbed again and came back endlessly. But as the last of the beasts of steel deployed into line, he ran after his own because it was the sole familiar thing in the insanity about him.

The dawn was seeping through the fog when the Renaults nosed out of the thicket into the open and Curly saw darkly before him his first battle-field. It was not only before him but behind him; above, where the planes whirred and whence the wasted shrapnel rattled from the anti-aircraft cannon; beneath, where the shells dived and came back in geysers of steel splinters mingled with bones and flesh and mud—and noise!—maddening noise that never ended and made death all but desirable.

The earth was like a picture of the moon, pitted and pocked, slimy and foul, gashed with trenches, with barbed-wire everywhere. The only soldiers visible were the sprawled corpses and the lines of helmeted heads set like rows of skulls behind the parapets.

The wonder was that anybody lived, that anybody dared advance. Curly stared ahead and turned to run. Behind him a squad of his own platoon was advancing ahead of the infantry support. Something fell from the sky. There was a black oil tank on fire there; then nothing; then a hole; and no more soldiers. "I can't toin back!" He shifted to the right, where a line of men was coming up over the top. Machine guns caught their range and they went back like hollyhocks flopping across a scythe. "Nothin' doin' over there!" He shifted to the left.

For the sake of surprise the long preliminary bombardment had been omitted so that the enemy could not be warned to concentrate reserves, but now the American barrage was coming along ahead of the infantry, pelting the earth with hailstones that walked and rent the earth. "The left is woist of all."

The only shelter Curly found was his own tank, donkeying along as pretty as a steel-riveted coffin blown out of a tomb and sent sliding and bumping across the ground. A whole row of giants' coffins was bobbing and dipping in a ludicrous row and the invisible Germans were giving them all they had. Their biggest shells thumped and thundered, vanished, towered back in smoke, always missed but always promised death the next time.

When the tanks got up to the range of the machine guns, a level rain of bullets beat upon the steel and rained backward with the blood-curdling scream and whir of ricochet. Now Curly had only to put out his hand and pluck that wound he had prayed for. But he hugged his rifle like a drown-

ing man and cowered under his all-too-little helmet singing with the dust of steel. Inside the tank, safe and snug, sat the driver and the gunner, stripped to the waist and watching the fun through a slit, not troubling even to reply to the shot that peppered the thick rind of their crawling fort.

The tanks were unbelievably serene in their ugly progress, unhurried, irresistible, imperturbable, invulnerable, waddling with ponderous deliberation.

They were vast iron idiots obliterating everything they met. Ahead of them was a narrow trench with a line of Heinies pop-eyed, too paralyzed to fire. The monsters slid up to them, snapped off the barbed wire and the posts and smeared the trench, the soldiers and their weapons into one grisly paste.

Curly had to follow, realizing what was underfoot. He would have vomited if there had not come a blast of fire from the flank. He and Puffy ducked to the other side of the tank.

The gunner must have heard the drum of the bullets on the side, for the old duck whirled and swam to the right where a machine gun pill-box was hidden in a clump of ragged trees. The Renault bunted the trees over upon the nest, crushed the concrete emplacement into dust, smothered the little garrison in its own fortress and sealed it smooth.

Then it swung north again, jouncing and nodding toward a trench whose tenants had witnessed the rubbing out of their compatriots. They had just strength enough to clamber out, hold up their shivering hands and stutter, "*K-K-Kame-Kamerad-d-d!*"

The tank stopped short. The two passengers came out for air, sweating and naked as stokers. Breen and a batch of infantry swarmed up. Breen ordered the Germans to drop their weapons and take off their belts. A sergeant went among them and with a trench knife slashed their suspenders so that they must use their hands to hold their breeches up—which they would do from no sense of decency, but because they could not run or walk or fight with their breeches about their knees.

If Breen had had a decent streak in him, he would have sent Curly back with the prisoners. But he chose another man, who was fool enough to protest.

While they paused, a big shell made a crater so close to Curly's feet that he rolled down into it. He decided to play dead and stay put. But the lousy Breen looked down and called:

"Snap out of that, Mr. Boyle! I'm just as scared as you are, but I'm going forward with you. You've got a chance for life if you come along, but if you don't, I'll kill you myself."

Curly came to life and scrambled cravenly out of the well. Breen put up his pistol, the tank crew stepped into their limousine and closed the door. If Puffy had not knocked up the barrel of Curly's rifle, Breen's war record would have been ended, like many another officer's, with a cartridge from one of his own men.

The trench was so wide that the stern of the Renault sank in it and it could not pull out for all its snorting and plunging. The Germans got the range again and Curly must stand and shudder while the big shells thundered as if all the devils were shooting craps for him.

The advance was checked till one of the other Renaults could be fetched back and a chain fastened and a maddening while spent in bucking and tugging till the whippet was on the level again, and able to proceed.

Curly died a score of times and could not believe that he still lived when the blast and the ruin of each shell had given way to the next.

The tanks lumbered on. They tilted up a hill-ock, coasted down, straddled a trench and filled it up, wiped down a dugout, waded a crimson rivulet.

Then Curly's tank began to wobble, to fall behind the line again. It stopped dead. Smoke poured from its crevices. The door flung wide and the crew swarmed out, grimy and scorched and singed. Inside, blazes fluttered.

The driver reached in to snatch out fire-extinguishers and squirt them on the flames while the enemy snipers began to snipe. From the trenches, fat, helmeted men in gray who had waited to surrender, swarmed out to capture.

Breen was on hand again. He shouted to Curly to mount the tank but before Curly could refuse, he turned to Puffy, took Puffy's big muddy boot in the palm of both hands and shot him to the hot roof.

Puffy was scared brave. He fired off all his cartridges and then reached down for hand-grenades and piled them at his feet. Then he stood up and hurled them here and there where they were most needed. There was something beautiful and joyous about him even in the eyes of Curly, who stood palsied, unable to decide where to fire or how to cover.

Puffy was too big to miss, too drunk with battle-hooch to care for a nick in the ribs, a bite out of his thigh. When his right arm cracked, he threw grenades with his left.

Curly saw two snipers kneeling and taking aim at Puffy. He wished he had the power to protect his friend. But he could not find his muscles.

Then Puffy came over as if a mule had kicked him off the roof. He fell at Curly's feet, splashed up bloody mud and took the count with his mouth open and his eyes rolled back white.

This was what Curly needed. His country, his flag, his honor, his duty meant nothing. But when the blackguards got his friend, he understood. That put it all in words of one syllable. He saw a German dashing toward him with his bayonet low. Curly touched the trigger and the Heinie went forward on his nose. Another gray-backed louse was on his heels. Curly fired and missed, but knocked the man's gun aside with his own and then with all the famous drive of his punching muscles, and as if the bayonet were the far end of his fist, he smote that Heinie in the pit of his belly. This too was something Curly could understand. This was what his muscles understood and loved.

Breen, who was lending a hand in the tank, backed right into a galloping German's bayonet. Curly caught the blade in his hand and dragged it toward his own chest, sidestepped it, shifted his gun into the hollow of his left arm and lifted the Heinie off his feet with an uppercut to the point of the jaw. And now Curly was so much himself again that he began to count the senseless Heinie out—"One, two, t'ree."

Amazed and admiring, Breen yelled, "Good work, Boyle. Much obliged!" He wrung Curly's bleeding left hand and apologized!

The crew leaped into the tank and slammed the door, and then the gun of the tank began to spit. The siege was over. The assailants fell over one another in flight. The tank whirled this way and that, coughing and belching lead. It broke half a dozen German legs and cleared the neighborhood, then moved on with the disgusting wobble of an old gander late to dinner.

Curly hesitated by Puffy's side, weeping and cursing. But stretcher-bearers came up, darted to Puffy and carried him back. Curly tied a dirty handkerchief about his left hand and ran after his tank, strangely interested, drunkenly eager for more of this kind of stuff.

When the advance for the day ended at the appointed spot, the tanks found shelter in the lee of a high mound, and the stokers came out into the evening air to rest and consider their glory. Breen strode up, slapped Curly on the shoulder and said to everybody within reach of his voice:

"If it hadn't been for old man Boyle's boy, I wouldn't be here tonight. He saved my life."

Curly was still surly enough, and frank enough to mutter:

"I wonder why."

Breen tried to laugh that off, but there was regret in his laughter, and the other men stared at Curly as if he were a skunk from somewhere.

That night seemed no longer to Curly than a period between rounds. It was as if his seconds worked over the groggy fighter in his sleep, for by

morning his soul was washed and fanned with towels, given a wet sponge to drink from, and heartened for the gong.

When he was awakened a little before the Zero with a tap and a whisper, "Ten to go!" there leaped up a different Curly, ready for battle, eager for battle, keen to fight for—for what? He could not have told. It was not for the fun or the pride of fighting as in the ring, or for any championships or medal. He was fighting for a mystery.

This day's work involved the capture of an ex-village. There were stone walls and cellars and piles of tumbled masonry to overcome, with enemy soldiers as thick as cooties.

A two-story church tower was the key position and just as Curly's tank reached it the steering-gear jammed. The whippet went round and round the building so fast that it all but flattened Curly, dancing to escape the stones and bullets from the upper windows. Suddenly the old bus decided to quit circling and dive. It catapulted into a doorway with such a leap that it brought down the whole shell-riddled tower upon itself.

A smoke of rubble-dust went up and when it settled, Curly could not even see the tank. He dropped his rifle and began to tear at the masonry. Other soldiers came to his aid and they flung aside blocks of granite and dead Germans with equal unconcern.

They cleared a space along the side of the tank till they reached the door, but a tottering pile of stone stood waiting here to come down in avalanche the moment the keystone was removed.

The rescuers stood baffled while the men in the

tank pounded and suffocated. At last Curly climbed a tier or two, set his feet with care and took the weight upon his own great shoulder-blades. Bracing himself, like old Atlas in the almanac, he straddled the doorway of the tank and then with all his strength, and more, heaved upward and backward, wondering just when the stones would begin to roll and crack his fool neck.

But what did his neck matter before the danger to the sacred tank?

Somehow he held, shivering and dripping with sweat from the strain, while his comrades pulled out the last block. The tank door swung back, and the all but strangled crew fell out. They looked up to see that they passed between the legs of Curly Boyle.

The next job was to extract Curly. But how were they to do that? He was himself the keystone of the arch, and all above him was piled white stone trembling to spill at his least quaver.

While the men gaped and planned how they could shore him up till they could get him out, Curly watched in a failing agony but with a certain grandeur in his eyes. He groaned:

"Watch out below, yous guys, or some of yous'll get hoit."

Then he wilted, caved, came down like a crucifix. And all the wall came with him. There was nothing in front of them but a cairn of stone, and Curly buried alive within.

Breen and his men went at it with frenzy, their eyes drenched, their language foul, their hands gashed and scarlet. They found his head, at last, face down, bleeding, lifeless. When they had dug

the rest of him out, he came back to life, but liked it so little that he went right back into the dark again.

There was an awful limpness about him when they laid him on the ground at a distance from the church. His back was broken and his arms and legs seemed to have no bones in them.

As an ordinary casualty, he was not worth wasting precious time over, but as Curly Boyle, the savior of his tank—well, let the Heinie wait!

Then a great shell struck the ruin of the tower and finished the tank, a fragment of which ripped off a piece of Curly's shoulder. The bleary-eyed sergeant shook his fist at the Vaterland and said it was a dirty trick.

Surgeons came up and started Curly on the long way to the rear to a ghastly relief station. The rough handling Curly was receiving here was ended by a shell that killed the surgeon, and wounded Curly further. Another surgeon took up the interrupted task and turned Curly over to stretcher-bearers, who ran back with him. One of these was killed and the other wounded, and Curly thrown sprawling.

A corporal, who was bringing back a number of Germans carrying their own wounded, made four of them spill two dead Heinies on the ground and take up Curly and the living stretcher-bearer.

Eventually Curly reached the first line of ambulances and was shoved into one. The way to the next hospital was under heavy fire. A shell tore up the road ahead. The ambulance driver jammed on the brakes to reverse. Another shell tore up the road in the rear. The driver leaped out, built a

hasty bridge of stone and timber, worried across it, and jounced on his way. A German airplane pursued him and finally caught him with a dropped bomb before it was driven off by an American plane. The ambulance was crushed, and the wounded killed or wounded anew.

But another ambulance gathered the living fragments. There was hesitation whether or not to include Curly, ambiguous between alive and dead; but they slipped him in to save the trouble of deciding.

All this while, the Patent Leather Kid had been doing her stuff wherever her band of mummies halted. She had immense success with her act, but she could not keep her promise to herself that she would dance alone.

Too many dismal soldiers eyed her luscious body, their starved eyes aching with meek longing to hold beauty to their hearts just once more before they courted misery, ugliness and maybe death.

After her dance she went always to the huts again without stopping to change her costume. She let whoever asked her for a dance hug her and wamble her about. Sometimes she felt a soldier kiss her hair. Sometimes hungry lips brushed her ear. Sometimes some famished rake would flirt a little. Why should she care? Who was she to stiffen herself and murmur, "Sir!"

She returned the clinches and pretended to be overcome with equal love.

She passed her twenty-five thousandth mile, and still she could not stop.

One midnight after the last soldier had ground her last toe the last time and the hut closed down,

she went stumbling back to her sleeping quarters so tired that she had just decided to lie down in the street to take the toothache out of her feet when she realized that she was passing an improvised hospital where an endless procession of litters was being dumped outside in the dark.

As she paused shuddering, a surgeon, maniac with overwork and horror, stepped out of the house. The shaft of light illumined the startling figure of the half-naked Patent Leather Kid—all too manifestly a woman. He growled:

“Here, you! We need you!”

Fay was too tired to protest or resist. She went in with him on tipsy feet and the sight she saw had either to kill her or refresh her. It woke her with the flaring pain of driving a tack up under the finger-nail. She fell back, gibbering: “I’m sorry, sir, but I—I don’t know anything but dancing.”

“You can hand me things, can’t you? And hold things—including your tongue. Mrs. Vanderhoef will tell you.”

Mrs. Vanderhoef was a New York woman of enormous wealth and size. She had sold two thousand cups of chocolate and had been shuffling bedward to take a heavy weight off her feet when the surgeon saw her. He had pressed her into service an hour ago. Fay almost fainted at the sight of her. She was scarlet from head to foot, her white hair matted with blood, every inch of her drenched and dripping.

These two extremes from the opposite poles of New York quality and beauty were equaled here by the bitter need for womanhood. Fay’s patent leather suit and her slim bare shoulders and legs

were soon of an equal red with Mrs. Vanderhoef's uniform.

The worst was the slipping on the floor. And the things Fay had to hold! to hand! and to take away! And then the silence! Nothing but the little clink and slish of knives, the ripping of gauze and tape, the surgeon's curt demands, the uncouth animal noises the soldiers made trying to keep from distressing the ladies with a sign of their unearthly pain.

This once wanton little girl and this once snobbish matron, this once dapper surgeon and these once hale and hearty lads now crimson with gore and doddering through a red Gehenna of anguish were all doing things that nobody could have done if everybody had not been doing them—the foe, the Allies, the least and the greatest, men, animals, machines.

In honest mathematics, nothing multiplied by infinity is nothing still. But in the sardonic nonsense of war, it became infinity; the impossible became universal.

In the times of sanity, Fay would have died of horror before she could have helped in the benevolent butchery of one of these poor boys who were brought in like rolls of cloth, cut, slashed, patched together and carted away. To have witnessed one such operation would have sent Fay to the floor in a swoon or howling in flight. But as she passed the knives that must gouge dozens and dozens and dozens of mutilated wretches, she never even sighed to realize that further hundreds were on the way to her door, and millions were yet to be massacred along the incalculable frontier of the war.

The first sound she made to show that she was not a mere handy kitchen cabinet of utensils was when the surgeon threw back a blanket from a thing more like a scarecrow than a man. The rips and blotches in the uniform were an index of appalling wounds.

Fay glanced dully overshoulder, from the boiler where she was blistering her fingers snatching steel instruments from scalding water. Then she let out a little whine and caught at Mrs. Vanderhoef to keep from falling.

The surgeon made a swift survey of the stretcher's contents and the tag attached, threw back the blanket and growled: "Take him away. He's past all mending."

Fay shrieked and clawed the surgeon: "No! No! No! It's Coily Berl!"

"I can't help it if it's General Pershing. I can't waste precious time on him."

"But you gotta! It's Coily! It's my boy. He was so brave. He hadda be! for he hadda whip himself foist."

"I'm sorry, honey, but——"

"You save him now or I'll wreck this whole Gawdam' joint!"

The surgeon blinked his eyes, came out of the coma of his frenzy, and snapped: "Well, why don't you fetch the anesthetic?"

Mrs. Vanderhoef, with a blur of tears in her parched eyes, tried to check Fay and break it gently to her, but she had dashed past and learned the grim fact, announced it with a moan:

"Oh, Gawd! It's all gone!"

The fierce eyes of the surgeon softened a little as

he laid his awful hand on Fay's shoulder and muttered: "Better let him sleep."

"Would he—would he wake up?"

"Not in this world, my child."

"This woild is the only one I know. You bring him back and give him his chance to make good, d'ya hear, or—or—oh, don't lose me my Coily now!"

"Hold hard, then!"

At the first thrust of the knife, Curly came back from wherever he was. He saw the crimson caricature of Fay, everything red, red. He gasped in a husk of voice:

"Are we in hell, Kid?"

She kissed him and whispered: "Not yet, but we're on our way through, Coily boy. It's goin' to hoit—it's goin' to hoit woiss than anybody was ever hoit before. But they can't down Coily Berl, the comin' champ—the champi'n of the woil', can they, Coily?"

That was the word he needed—an appeal to his pride, his swagger, his conceit. He was—he must be Coily Berl. It was all he had to help him—that and the ferocious little fingers clenching his, and the warm christening of tears from other eyes.

Through Curly's tortured soul ran a phantasmagory of tanks, rolling over him, munching him with the alligator-jawed rollers, shrapnel searing him, bayonets piercing him, shells filling him with ragged iron in a pit of fog whose only light was a will-o'-the-wisp in patent leather, glinting and beckoning.

There was no anesthetic but nature's drug of exhaustion. When Curly could hurt no more, he hurt

no more. He fell into what Fay hoped was sleep, but it might be what it looked more like.

For hours and hours Fay darted from the surgeon's elbow to look at Curly, wondering whether he were still in that great bolt of bandages, or had gone on his way. She fainted at last and Mrs. Vanderhoef laid her by Curly's side with a part of his blanket over her. She slept hours and hours of woe away, and when she woke with a start, she wrung a groan from Curly that was better than the silence she dreaded most.

When that hospital was evacuated, Fay went back with the body that was just alive enough not to grow cold. She and Curly came to rest in a base hospital that had been a palace.

Here all of Curly's visible wounds healed, and all his bones were knit until he was restored to a health that was faultless except for one thing: he could not move a muscle from his neck down.

To a man whose whole life and ambition had been muscular, who had thought of hardly anything but the perfection of his sinews so that he should be the most agile, the most forceful being on earth of his weight, a life sentence to immobility was the ultimate doom. His very frenzies could find no expression. He never had had any language beyond the vocabulary of rough sport. Now he could not make even a gesture of protest or of defiance. He could not clench that fist which was to him what a brush is to a painter, a chisel to a sculptor, a pen to an author, a rifle to a soldier. His fist was himself. Life confronted him as a nightmare in which he was himself the marble monument of what he might have been.

With blurred speech from uncertain lips he babbled to Fay.

"I got the K. O. for keeps. It ain't gonna stop at the count of ten or ten million. I gotta lay here forever and ever like the ossified man in the muzhum. I'm petterfied."

None could understand his woe better than Fay, for her life was also a career of muscles. The speed and rhythmic pulse of her members were her heaven, and her reason and reward for existence.

She could imagine herself frozen and made Curly's inferno her own.

At first she tried, as people always do, to console the victim by belittling his affliction and pointing out how much worse it might have been. But she soon saw that this was poison to Curly.

Thereafter she poured out her grief. There was no need to pretend. She had merely to let her heart flow. She wept so bitterly that it became Curly's business to console her by making light of his disaster. Sometimes she would dance for him to while away the endless hours. His eyes drank her in and he sighed:

"You're the one best bet for dancin'. You'll be woith a million to some manager when the war's over."

"That's the stuff, boy. You'll lay still and take the rest you've oined and mama'll go out and dance and bring home the bacon to her baby."

"She will like hell! Do you think I'm the kind of a guy would let a goil hamstring herself tryin' to take care of me? The gov'ment will do that. You go on about your business and forget you've ever knew me."

Self-sacrifice from Curly! Altruism from Curly! Rage because somebody else was to be incommoded for his sake! Love that could order its love into exile for her sake!

"Oh, Coily, quit bein' so good! Haul off and give me a slam in the map for the sake of old times. You're so sweet nowadays I'm afraid you're goin' to toin into a dam' angel. Be yourself, Coily! Be yourself!"

When Hugo Breen was granted leave, he traced Curly as soon as he could. He was embarrassed to find Fay with him. It was confusing to see the man who had hated him so well and saved his life, lying helpless in the care of the girl they had fought over.

In revenge he dumped a whole scuttleful of coals of fire on Curly's head. He praised him with an extravagance that became Hugo well and endeared him further to Fay. He announced that his battle report had recommended Curly for decoration, and the recommendation had been approved. A medal would soon be decorating Curly's manly chest.

Curly smiled feebly and said: "I thank you, sir, and I hope you'll excuse me not saluting, but I can't seem to lay hold of me hand."

He suffered a new pang when Fay went out with Hugo and did not come back for a long time. By then Curly had whipped himself again and he managed to disgorge his thought: "I'm glad you've took up with that guy. He's nutty about you and he'll make you a swell husbin'."

"Oh, ye-yuh? Well, not in this life, dear-ree. What I was talkin' to him about was gettin' some new dope on you. He's going to bring down the

swellest soigeons in the business, and give you a real shake-down."

As a matter of fact Hugo had implored Fay not to sacrifice her youth and beauty to a man she could not help, and to join her life to his own, but she had only smiled and told him not to make her laugh since she had chapped lips. She kissed him and told him to run along and bring up the top sergeants in the medical world.

The big boys came down and went over Curly and through him, praised his condition and said that his only trouble was mental. All he needed to control his muscles was to believe that he could. He was suffering from an inferiority complex, shell shock, and a kind of spiritual lockjaw.

Fay was in ecstasies over the news. And so was Curly. But when he tried to move his muscles, nothing happened. He gnashed his teeth in an anguish of effort. He knitted his brows and strove till the sweat oozed. His head rolled from side to side in defeat.

"Nothin' doin', honey. It can't be did."

"It's gotta be did, Coily! All you gotta do is take up your bed and walk. Then you can begin trainin' once more, you can go back to America now and be the champi'n prize-fighter of the woild."

His head swung sidewise again. "I don't wanna go back in no ring and paste a lot of pugs in the snoot. I wanna go back with my regiment. I wanna be a soldier. I wanna fight for—for my country."

Tears were suddenly on his eyelashes in a gush of patriotism from unknown wells in his heart. Fay smiled sadly.

"Coily, ain't you fought enough for it? Your sweet country has mighty near ruined you."

"Yeah, you said it. But love ain't run like a business proposition. Seems like the people you love best are the ones you do the most for, not the ones that do the most for you. I never really loved me mother till I begun to toin over to her me prize-ring money. She didn't last long enough to get much of it. You're diff'rent. I never done nothin' for you but give you trouble, and take your heart out of you. So you ought to love me a lot."

"I do, Coily! Gawd knows, I do!"

"Well, that's the way I love America. I used to notice how the woist wounded soldiers was the ones that had the most patertism. Jake Stuke says it's the bunk. But I never knew I had a country till I'd gave her all I had."

Fay would not relinquish hope of bringing him back to the glory of his strength. He tried and tried but at each defeat his effort was more feeble. Even desire began to flicker out for lack of hope to feed on. He sought to explain it to Fay:

"If you'd ever been knocked out, Fay, you'd know just how it is. When the Joisey Skeeter give me me foist K. O., I was just this way. I was wise to every little thing. I seen the champi'nship fadin'. But I couldn't get up. I simpullu couldn't get up. And now I've got a poimanent K. O. I can't find the right noive to pull me muscles. I bust meself tryin' but—I'd give all the woild—but you—if I could budge one of them concrete toes of mine, but I can't—I can't. Nothin' doin'."

Fay gave up nagging him. She settled down to be the lifelong nurse of a lifelong invalid.

Other people badgered him. Puffy Kinch waddled into the hospital like a human tank. He had a wound stripe, promotion and a decoration for distinguished valor—a word he could not pronounce. And he was greedy for more. He was on his way back into the t'ick of it.

This news rocked Curly like a jab in the jaw. But after one mad struggle he smiled at Puffy.

“Over the river, Puff! Give the Kaiser a sweet kiss for me when you ketch him.”

Then he closed his eyes and pretended to sleep. Fay could tell that he was whipping himself again, throttling down the outcries and curses of unendurable defeat.

Often they put him in a wheeled chair and let her trundle him about the corridors and the great marble verandas. Sometimes she could get men to carry his chair down the steps, and then she would wheel him out on the grass.

Trees and flowers and grass were all right, but they were not in his line, and he wearied of them. From the distance they could often hear the blurred flourish of bugles, the dim thud of drums.

One day there was such a fanfare of brass and such a hint of far-off cheers that he urged her to run his chair down to the street. The eagerness in his face was like an inner sunlight. She knew that his soul was marching, though his poor feet were but so much lead. Through the iron railing of the fence they saw a regiment in khaki—Americans!

The French were cheering them mightily, because their aid assured triumph after prolonged doubt. The Americans rode in on the chariots of the dawn after a night of storm. These Americans

seemed to be hurrying to the battle lest they arrive too late. Fay, beaming on them with pride, heard Curly speak and asked him what he had said. He did not answer but she gradually pieced together the remembered sounds. He had groaned:

"Oh Gawd, lea' me go back in!"

Standing at his right side she put her left arm about his shoulder and squeezed the rock it was. The band blaring the jazz that had set all Europe agog, suddenly struck a more solemn strain. It began to bump the bumps. Curly croaked:

"O-oh, say, can you see by the——' I wouldn't stand up when I could, and now——"

His head leaned out a little; hats were falling off in a breaking wave. Through the iron pickets he could see a torment of color in the breeze, a writhing, star-sprinkled rainbow above the helmets and the bayonet-glitter. That old flag was coming along! It was always coming along! And always trying to fight free from its own staff—beating about the faces of the color-guard like a wild bird, a red-winged, white-breasted bluebird!

"Fay!" he gasped. "Me cap! Me cap! Take off me cap!"

She whipped it from his brow and held it over his heart and was so much a soldier now in behalf of her disabled veteran that she brought her right hand smartly to her brow and kept it there till the flag should have passed.

As she stood transfixed, she felt a trembling under her left hand and a mighty thumping of Curly's heart. Wondering, but holding herself rigid at attention, she let her glance fall upon Curly and saw that he was being shaken with a great ague.

She could not see his face, but his head was bent as if he were trying to lift a tremendous weight—wrecking himself in a destroying endeavor. There was a quivering at his side. His right hand was shuddering! The hooked talons of the fingers were unbending, forcing themselves outward, straightening, drawing together!

The whole forearm was tremulous now. It was rising, rising, with a sense of rending itself from marble restraints. It came up slowly but with a deadly certainty till the forefinger touched the brow over the right eye. The head came back and up, erect.

Fay's tears of joy were lost in his curls as she understood that he was rigid now only because he wanted to be—rigid only till the flag went by.

And the flag went by, swirling, leaping, joyously determined to be free.

THE DICE OF GOD

By Cynthia Stockley

IT was Sunday, and luncheon time at the Victoria Falls Hotel. Most of the fifty-odd guests had wandered down the long wooden veranda to the dining-room at the end. But one group of men who had just arrived from Livingstone, and were scattered round a small table covered with cocktail glasses, did not budge, and their reasons for non-budging were two. First: Blake, whose luncheon they intended to eat, was still in the hotel kitchen, deep in confab with the chef, for Blake was no ordinary man, and ordinary luncheons were no use to him. Second: two ladies had come slowly up from the direction of the Falls, and were now in the garden just below the veranda. They seemed unable to tear themselves away from the sight of the great Zambezi Gorge, with its still green waters stealing sluggishly below, and above it those rainbow-tinted clouds of mist which the natives call "the smoke that sounds."

The six Rhodesians had seen that view so often that they were sick of it, but the sight of two pretty women beautifully gowned in slinky-dinky white dresses that suggested "London, Torment, and Town," was another pair of sleeves altogether, and since they first hove in sight, speculation as to who they might be had been rife, not to say rampant; but no one knew the correct answer to the riddle until Blake came sidling back from his *indaba* with

the cook. Blake always knew other people's business in richer and rarer detail than they knew it themselves. Put to the question by Brookes, he gave a mere squint after the two figures now retreating into the hotel, and answered without hesitation.

"Those, my dear Nibby, are the two experts who are 'doing' this country as it has never been 'done' before, though you are aware that ever since Rhodes opened it up as a realm of rest for rotters, it has been done up, and done down, and done in, and done brown."

Nibby Brookes, like most of the others, tumbled to the truth then—that these were Anne Haviland and Narice Vanne, the writer and the painter! The next thing to know was, which was which? But Mundell, who had been policing up on the Congo border, far from newspapers, needed fuller information.

"Experts?" he demanded querulously. "What kind of experts? Who are they? What?"

"Gently, my Blood-Orange, gently," said Blake tenderly. "Don't unnerve yourself. They are not of your world. One is a celebrated writer whose books you have never read but will vainly try to buy. She is now writing another, all about the noble Rhodesian as she has seen him. When done, copies may be purchased for ten-and-six each. *I'm* done. Come and stoke up."

He led the way to luncheon and his partner and best friend, Sir Anthony Tulloch, more familiarly known as Bad Luck, followed, leaning on a stick and dragging his left leg a little, as he had done since the war. Next came Monsieur Brunel, a

bullet-headed Belgian from Elizabethville, then the three Mounted Policemen, whose lounging gait, even though all were in mufti, subtly suggested horses.

The two women coming quietly back onto the veranda had an excellent rear-guard view of the party. "Typical Rhodesians!" remarked the fair one.

"Yes. The real soft-nosed bullet," said the dark one with a velvety little drawl. "Fatal."

So light-foot went they on the heels of the fatal ones that they were neither seen nor heard until after Major Blake's party was deployed round the big center table. Then a Mounted Policeman's trained eye spied them out sitting by one of the windows.

"There they are! They must have stolen in like a pair of leopards!" murmured Nibby.

A closer view of them could now be obtained, and several seconds of sheer silence passed while a mental referendum was taken. It is more than likely that the fair one caught most of the votes in the room, as well as at the center table, for she had the kind of golden beauty that immediately ensnares the eye. Compared to her the other, dark and tall and boyish, with her head cocked in the air, was like a silhouette beside a miniature of lilies and roses in a gilt frame. A sigh went up from Blake's table—the sort of combined, concerted sigh that is both seen and heard.

"What say if I go and ask them to come and join us at luncheon?" said Blake, smiling his screwed-up smile.

They told him that though they knew him to

be capable of most outrages, they still believed him to be visited by moments of horse-sense, even sanity.

"What'll you bet I don't?" he persisted, still squinting, and screwing an imaginary monocle into his right eye—a habit of his. They bet him anything he liked, and warned him at the same time to mind his eye. He grew reflectively argumentative.

"Why shouldn't I? They're celebrities and so am I. Celebrities should always know each other."

"Well, you try it," said Anthony Tulloch, and the scar across his cheek and nose gave his smile a peculiarly grim quality.

"Oh, you old Bad Luck! I suppose you think you're the only great adventurer and daredevil in this country?"

"Perhaps," said Bad Luck carelessly, but bitterness was added to the grimness of his smile, and Blake wished he had left the jest unspoken, for his love for Anthony Tulloch was no jest.

"You show him that he's not, Major," egged on young Brookes.

"Yes, go on, Billy," urged Mundell.

"Don't worry, I'm going," said Blake. "I only want to know what the betting is that I don't bring them back."

They bet him variously, a dinner at the hotel that night, free drinks for a week, and ten shillings. Bad Luck laid five to one in pounds. Brunel was the only man who refrained from a gamble. Throughout the discussion he had continued stolidly upon the hors-d'œuvres showing a marked preference for German sausage. But even he suspended operations to watch, when Blake rose from his chair and ambled gracefully across the room.

They were too far off to hear what was said. But to observe Blake was enough. Most of them were sorry for the snub they knew he was going to get, for they all liked Blake. No one could help liking him in spite of, or perhaps because of, his extravagances and vanities. He was the soul of good nature, and bursting with generosity. He stood with his finger-tips resting on the edge of the table, between the miniature and the silhouette. Both were staring up at him in surprise.

From the center table, the dark face could only be seen in profile, but the cold haughtiness of the face of cream and roses would have been patent at any distance under a mile. However, Blake smiled beguilingly from one to the other and seemed quite undisturbed. He cocked his head on one side, winked, squinted, and appeared to bore into each listening face with an invisible gimlet fixed in his left eye—another unhappy habit of his. It was a deplorable sight.

"He's in the soup, all right," groaned Nibby Brookes.

"Hope to the Lord they don't have him pitched out on his ear," was Bad Luck's pious prayer.

In common decency they turned away their eyes. Billy Blake was a good chap, and it was a pity to see him so disgraced. Still, his blood was on his own head. At the sound of a chair being pushed from a table, and the retiring steps of Billy Blake, they all gazed into the *consommé Richelieu* which had just been served. When a fellow who is a decent sportsman is returning from the field after achieving a duck's-egg, it's not the game to stare him out of countenance.

But when they looked up, it was to find Blake scuffling with plates and spoons, and pushing Brunel farther up the table to make room next himself for the lady of the profile. If he had not succeeded in bringing the whole picture-gallery, he had at least managed to capture the silhouette and get away with it. She seated herself, and smiled a gay and friendly smile at them all.

"I think it is most awfully nice of Major Blake to ask me to join you," she said. "That's the best of Rhodesia. Everybody is so jolly and informal!"

They gazed at her with admiration and relief, and saw that she was not a woman at all but a girl. A jolly, sunburnt girl, with a scattering of tiny dark brown freckles across the faint red of her cheeks. Her nose had a slight bump on it as if at some time she had had a spill, this tiny deflection in its straightness giving an added whimsicality to the gay violet eyes above it, and she wore her lips curved, to part into a smile at any moment. Her throat, and a great V on her breast where the gown opened, were burned a deeper brown than her face, but at the edges of this dark-tinted V her skin peeped and glinted like white silk. Her long slim hands were undecorated except by a man's signet-ring bearing a coat of arms.

She looked an utter girl, and there was such an unmarried "come hither" look in her eyes that anyone would have felt challenged to find out on what attitude of mind such a look was based. Two at least of the men at the table resolved to solve this probablem as soon as possible—Bad Luck being one and Billy Blake the other. Meanwhile the latter was giving her the pet names of the company.

"This is Sir Anthony Glenpatrick Tulloch, better known for reasons we will not go into as 'Bad Luck.' "

"Oh, *do* go into the reasons!"

Sir Anthony's queer eyes gave her the glimmer of a smile, but their expression transformed itself so curiously when they shot a glance in the direction of Blake's that the latter murmured:

"Later—when he's not here," and hastily continued by denting a finger into his own bosom: "Billy Blake, the fidus Achates of Bad Luck. Next to him you see the Blood-Orange, or Pretty-to-look-at."

Mundell, who really was a handsome fellow, fulfilled his other name by turning scarlet to the roots of his hair.

"He's demonstrating," continued the merciless Blake and passed on. "Nibby Brookes, the pride of the police. He wears such be-yu-ti-ful clothes." Nibby also demonstrated. "Castle—British by birth, but Spanish in temper and complexion."

Brunel, who did not come in for any pleasantries, was merely introduced by his military title of Commandante, but Blake murmured into her ear, boring a hole into it with his eye at the same time: "A beastly Belgian!"

"I like Belgians," was the smiling reply, and she gave her attention for a few minutes to the crop-headed one on her left.

His English was poor, but they got along excellently together in French, which Mundell and Castle also spoke well. Blake was able to have the chef up and bully him about the entrée before he had any more notice taken of him by his guest.

Also he had time to answer the malicious assumptions and inquiries on his left as to what the blond lady had said and done to him.

"Yes, I did get a snub," he admitted, "but it wasn't my fault exactly. A man is known by the company he keeps. She said frankly she didn't care for the look of you fellows."

"One to you, Billy," laughed Castle. "But I'd like to hear a few witnesses called on that statement."

"One will do," said Bad Luck, who thought Brunel had monopolized the Silhouette long enough. "Perhaps Miss Vanne will tell us."

Not much got past Narice Vanne evidently, for interested as she appeared to be in the Congo experiences of Monsieur Brunel, she heard the question, and with one little stare into Anthony Tulloch's strange eyes, plunged:

"Oh—it was not because she is unfriendly at all—only, well, she doesn't take to informality like I do—hasn't had to stroll round the world and get things for herself—like painters have to. It's different with writers, you know. We get all our effects and ideas externally—but *they* live inwards; consequently they're not so simple to get at, and can't unfold to new people so easily."

This was very nice and vague and subtle, and the listeners appreciated it. *Quand même*, as the French say—all the same . . .

So Miss Vanne went further: "Another thing, I expect she didn't want Mr. Morrison to feel out of it. There he is just joining her now. He's her cousin, and making the same trip with us—he looks after things, you know, and has been frightfully

good. It would have seemed rather mean for both of us to desert him."

The luncheon party was the gayest ever given by Billy Blake—he came down from Portulloch on an average of once a fortnight to give them—and the gilt crown to its head was that afterwards when they returned to the veranda for coffee, Miss Vanne easily got Miss Haviland and the cousin, Rupert Morrison, to join them. She did it in that simple, eager manner of hers that rushed people along before they had time to think, a manner apparently acquired by a lifelong habit of strolling about the world and "getting pictures externally." Billy Blake wished he possessed it. He felt that it would take only that last touch to make him perfect.

"They're an awfully jolly crowd, Anne," Miss Vanne's eager voice had been heard to say as she piloted her friends along, with the result that for a moment or two most of the jolly crowd were struck dumb with self-consciousness, all except the incorrigible Blake, who sighed into Miss Vanne's ear the great Rhodesian *mot*:

"Please pull our arms—our legs are tired."

While on her other side she heard the murmur of Bad Luck:

"Surely *you* ought to be the writer. Mere paint could never express your genius."

She turned to him with her open-lipped smile, leaving the others to make friends among themselves.

"I'm afraid I haven't any genius to express." A wistful look came into the violet eyes. "Since I came out here I've come to the conclusion I can't paint at all."

"Africa usually inspires people!"

"Oh, she inspires me, all right, but there's no material result to the inspiration. She's too big and wonderful to get on a few feet of canvas."

She stood, her hands behind her in rather school-boyish fashion, looking into Bad Luck's eyes as though she saw distance there instead of an expression that made most women's hearts flutter. He had rarely had a woman look at him in such detached fashion, and it gave him a less pleasing than novel sensation.

"My foregrounds are rotten. But I get a lot of fun out of the sunsets and the mountain-tops." She continued staring dreamily through him as if he were part of a rotten foreground, with a sunset beyond.

Miss Haviland broke in with a laugh as mellow and golden as her hair: "You're like that in actual life too, Narice. Crazy about the mountain-tops, and refusing to see the dull little near-by facts of every-day life—but they're there just the same."

Narice came to earth with a rush. Her gaze left Bad Luck and for a moment rested in a strange, piercing way on Anne Haviland. Then with her usual expression of boyish gaiety: "What does it matter to anyone if I am a fool?" she laughed. "Let's go and watch the Falls."

But Anthony Tulloch had another suggestion to offer. The motor-launch in which he and Blake had come from Livingstone lay at the landing-stage, and he proposed that the whole party should go for a run up the river as far as Kandahar Island, taking tea baskets with them. It was a glorious afternoon for an excursion, and everyone hastened

to accept. The great river fringed with palm and papyrus lay smooth and green as agate under the June sunshine, only here and there a swift swiveling movement round rushes or rock betraying the powerful undercurrents that were sweeping down to the Falls less than a mile and a half away from the landing-stage. It being late August, the river was already far below its greatest level, and the hippos had come down from the upper reaches to gambol with their young in the shallows. And sometimes as the launch pushed nearer the banks, a crocodile would stir from a low branch, and slip with a stealthy plop into the flood.

Miss Haviland sat in the bows, looking extremely decorative against a bunch of dark red and blue cushions, and surrounded by an admiring crowd. Narice Vanne, Brunel close at hand, was amidships with the motor, taking a great interest in Anthony Tulloch's management of the craft, and if her crowd was small numerically, it certainly made up for itself by enthusiasm. Brunel said little, but looked volumes, while Anthony Tulloch appeared to have made a bet with himself that her detached gaiety should be turned into a more personal channel. They bantered each other like two school-boys, and when Irish and Scotch wits get together, it is like two fine swords clashing out blue fire. Blake had not seen Anthony Tulloch in such spirits for many a day. Others noticed it too.

"I believe old Bad Luck's hit at last," said Mundell in an undertone.

"By gad, I should be glad!" answered Blake softly, and smiled at the river to hide the light that came into his eyes at the idea; but a moment later

his glance returned to the group in the middle of the boat. Narice Vanne was laughing, and passing her fingers over her charming if slightly defective nose.

"Yes, it's been broken twice. Once hunting, and once tooling down a hill in Scotland on a motor-bike I didn't know how to ride. An old Scotch gilly picked me up, and when he saw the bloody mess that was my face, he inquired solemnly:

"'Ha' ye got a mon?'"

"As I speak the lingo, I realized that he wished to find out if I was married yet, and I told him 'No.'

"'Weel—ye'll ne'er get one the noo!' said he."

The Belgian looked grieved and puzzled, but Anthony Tulloch gave a yelp of glee at this pretty specimen of Scotch philosophy.

Yes—that was the kind of a girl for Bad Luck, decided Blake. One who would drive away the black vultures of depression that brooded over him from time to time, pull him out of the pit with her bright sparkling ways—put a draft to his lips that knew too well the taste of ashes. It would be great!

"Tell me why you nickname him Bad Luck?" the soft voice of Anne Haviland broke in upon Blake's reflections.

Strange she should have asked at that moment! He didn't usually talk about his friend, but this was different—she was Miss Vanne's friend, and he might find out all about the latter from her, though there seemed little enough to find out about such a frank-eyed girl. But maybe Miss Haviland's sympathy could be enlisted anyway, and her good services obtained to further the romance.

"There's a certain amount of irony in that nick-

name, as with most things in this country." He spoke low so that Tony should not overhear him. "But here's Kandahar, and when we get out of reach of his very keen ears, I'll tell you all about it."

"Do!" she said pleasantly, and they found it no very difficult matter, while the others were making fires and unpacking tea baskets, to saunter off together, Miss Haviland picking red love-berries as they walked.

"It's ironical to call Tony's luck bad, for in a way he has the best luck in the country. Everything he touches turns to money. He came out here a poor man, one of Rhodes' great band of adventurers, and now he's worth a good deal more than half a million. He bought his ranch—which is the first in the country—at a shilling an acre, a hundred thousand acres, and now it is worth five pounds an acre. All his experiments in stock-raising and agriculture have done well, and on another farm he owns they've found the beginnings of a top-whole copper mine. Then he's liked equally by men and women and *that's* luck, isn't it?"

"Yes, indeed!" agreed Anne Haviland.

"On the other hand, the girl he was in love with turned him down before he got his luck, and that made him bitter towards women and life generally. He seems to get bad luck too in all the things he likes, cards, shooting, and sport generally, and then from the war, though he came back with a D. S. O. and a C. M. G., he also got that fearful scar across his nose, and his leg was all shot to bits. He can't walk any distance now, or ski, or climb, or box, all things he was keen about. Thank heaven he can still ride and swim or he'd go mad, I expect. But

he looks upon himself as a crock, and that's pretty bitter when a man's still young, and has been a crack athlete."

"He's certainly not a crock," said Anne Haviland, "and as for his scar, I think he's very attractive in spite of it and his limp."

"We think him hard to beat," averred Blake, "and I know if I were a woman he'd get me sooner than any Adonis." He shot a sudden question at his companion. "Don't you think that Miss Vanne is rather taken with him?"

"Narice?" Anne Haviland turned a startled glance on him, then smiled and shook her head. "Oh, no! you mustn't count on that. She's often taken with people."

"Do you mean she's a flirt?" asked Blake sharply.

"Oh, well—that's rather a hard way of putting it, Major Blake. Say rather that she is very fond of the society of men, and likes them better than women. There's no harm in that, is there?"

"N-o," pondered Blake uneasily. "No, I suppose not. Neither is it any reason why she shouldn't some day like the society of one man more than all the rest, is it?"

"I don't think the society of one man would ever satisfy Narice."

Blake gazed moodily at her. "Anthony Luck's not an ordinary man."

"No, indeed, he doesn't look it. Any woman would find him interesting, I should think, and no doubt Narice does, but——" She stopped, and looked about her in an unhappy, distracted sort of way.

"But what, Miss Haviland?"

"Oh," she said, half impatiently, "it's no business of mine, nor yours either! But if your friend has been badly hurt once, it would be a pity for him to——" She broke off again.

"To get hurt again?"

"To lose all faith in women."

"Ah!" A dark look passed over Blake's face.

"Not that she would hurt him *intentionally*," the other hastened to add. "Narice has the sort of good nature that never *means* any harm."

"And she's not going to mean it here, or do it either, if I can help it," said Blake grimly, but he had to say it to himself, for they were back upon the others, who for several minutes past had been hooting and hulloing for them to come to tea. He silently registered a vow to warn Bad Luck of what he had heard as soon as possible. He wasn't going to have old Tony falling in love with a girl who apparently was nothing but a heartless little flirt, for all her frank ways and clear-eyed looks.

They were all gathered round a table under the thatched shed put up for picnickers, and Blake observed that Anthony Tulloch was still fencing and frivolling at Narice Vanne's elbow. Her wit and gaiety clearly magnetized him, and Blake was bound to admit to himself that even if she was not such a "looker" as the golden Miss Haviland, she was something even more fetching—devilish companionable. And, when she was laughing and talking, her face seemed all delicate curves and color, her eyes full of violet fire, and there was the dash and grace of a thoroughbred in every movement.

Still—Blake was not going to have the happiness of his best friend drowned in those violet depths,

nor flung to the winds by those fine sunburnt hands now pouring out his tea. Not if Bill Blake could help it should Tony be broken twice on the wheel of a woman's vanity and caprice. As a beginning he proceeded, by the exercise of his whimsical bad manners, to edge Bad Luck away from the siren and get him busy attending instead to the wants of Miss Haviland—a far better occupation for him than staring into the depths of Narice Vanne's eyes.

And another thought flashed suddenly into his diligent brain—if Tony was by way of falling in love, why not with Miss Haviland? *There* was a woman now who, even if she hadn't the dark girl's vividness, possessed great beauty and, what was more important, a kind and generous heart. Of this she had given sufficient proof in her recent conversation with Blake, and he now studied her with the fresh interest of a newly hatched idea, as she sat leaning against one of the supports of the shed and looking up at Anthony Tulloch.

Her coloring was perfect; no berry-brown throat and freckles there, but a milky whiteness tinted most tenderly with the delicate pink of a wild rose. It was not indeed Miss Haviland's habit to brave the sunshine unprotected, but here in the shade she had unwound the swaths of veiling from her roses and lilies, and removed her hat from the pale gilt hair massed in shining coils and curls about her small head. Slung round her neck on a fine platinum chain, she wore a little flat diamond monkey of exquisite workmanship, with ruby eyes; he held an end of the chain in each outstretched hand, and his little tail dangled stiffly above the central shadow of her breast.

Yes—Anne Haviland was beautiful. Her features were almost classical in their regularity, but saved from coldness by the fulness and warm red of her lips, and her heavy-lidded, slumbrous brown eyes. No man, thought Blake, could look at such a woman without an extra beat in his wrist, and he knew that Anthony Tulloch was no bat where beauty was concerned.

What Blake began wondering now was how he himself had come to so rapid a decision that Miss Vanne was the more attractive of the two. The illusion could only have been founded on his experience at luncheon, when Narice Vanne's impulsive acceptance of his invitation had filled him with grateful appreciation, while the other's expression of haughty surprise chilled him more than he'd have cared to confess. But now he was inclined to admire Miss Haviland for her stand-offishness, while Miss Vanne's eager friendliness seemed only a further reason for the distrust that was rapidly growing in him.

"Easy come, easy go," quoth he bitterly. "A little facile jade!"

Yet within her radius bitterness did not last long. You couldn't help liking the little jade somehow, facile or not. She seemed to generate a sort of spontaneous happiness, and throw out tendrils of *joie de vivre* that entangled you. It wasn't that she was always laughing, either. On the contrary, she was often quite grave. She knew about things too, the kind of things men cared for—racing, games, politics—things that no one would suspect a woman painter of being interested in. And she was full of argument and repartee and fight. Never a dull

moment in her company; wherefore Blake clung to it manfully, managing to monopolize her on the launch going home, to the exclusion of all others; and as the eight-and-a-half mile voyage drew to an end, he patted himself happily on the back.

Fortuitously enough, Anthony Tulloch appeared to have completely transferred his absorption from the nymphish lure of Miss Vanne to the more Helen-of-Troyish attraction of her friend. So all was well, and probably under proper manipulation—which Blake, always prepared to play Providence, would undertake—all would turn out for the best in the best of all possible worlds.

But it appeared that Tony meant to have a hand in the game too, for as they reached the landing-stage he called out suddenly: "I've been trying to persuade Miss Haviland that she and Miss Vanne ought to come up to our place, Blake, and stay a bit."

Miss Haviland smiled across half doubtfully at her friend and collaborator.

"We ought not to go anywhere we can't write about, or paint. Shall we be able to put Portulloch in the book?"

"Ra-ther!" cried Blake. "No book, in fact, would be complete without it."

"And I can promise you all the glowing distances and mountain-tops you want," said Bad Luck to Miss Vanne. He had managed, Blake hardly knew how, to slink off next to her again, and get ahead of all the other fellows in handing her out of the launch.

"That settles it, then," she laughed. "It's a bet!"

No sooner landed than the Mounted Policemen had to bolt for it to the station, to catch their last and only train back to Livingstone. Uttering hasty and reluctant adieus, together with many pressing exhortations to their newly-made friends to come up soon and be shown the glories of Northern Rhodesia's capital, they departed. But they hated to go, and worst of all they hated the sprightly content with which Blake and Luck stayed behind.

"If we can only scrap this fellow Morrison now—and the Belgian," muttered Anthony Tulloch in Blake's ear.

But the Belgian—hitherto a sufferer from *nostalgie* for his native land—now seemed more inclined to take root in the hotel than continue his journey to the coast. Morrison, a pleasant enough fellow, with sleek light hair and quiet manners, could not be taken active objection to, for, though he undoubtedly had a prior right to the society of the two ladies, he never pushed it and seemed pleasingly unaverse to exist merely as a member of the crowd about them. However, he asserted his position sufficiently to insist on the others being his guests to dinner, a return compliment to the afternoon's jaunt.

So they all sat down together again that evening, and over the meal, arrangements for the visit to Portulloch were furthered. Bad Luck's suggestion was that the whole party should leave by his launch next day, while the baggage came on by train. Blake had never known him in such a hurry about anything for years, and it was clear that it was Narice Vanne who inspired this spirit of expedition.

"She looks and smells like a bunch of violets in

the wind," he had dreamily remarked to Blake just before dinner, and Blake, staggered and dumfounded at this explosion into poetry, could only stare. Now she was all fire and color, setting a light to the man beside her, so that he sizzled, and ricocheted, and went off bang brilliantly all through dinner, and the others were drawn in to scintillate with them.

Even the Belgian, seated on her other side, gave off a few sparks, and made it obvious that he admired Miss Vanne profoundly. Which was to the good, in Billy Blake's opinion at least, for he never moved from Miss Vanne's left elbow all the evening. A chaperon was not in it with him.

When Sir Anthony at ten o'clock announced that a beautiful lunar rainbow—one of the sights of the Falls—was due with the full moon, and suggested that they all go down to the gorge to see it, Brunel was the first to respond enthusiastically. Morrison frankly yawned at the notion, and spoke lovingly of bed. Miss Haviland had rubbed her heel and said she did not care to do any more walking. Only Narice Vanne cried out at once: "*I'll go!*"

"And I," repeated the Belgian firmly, and Bad Luck looked glum.

"That's o.k., then," reflected Blake, who had seen all the lunar rainbows he ever wanted or intended to see. "Brunel will play gooseberry far more effectively than I."

"I'll wait up till you come back, Narice," said Miss Haviland. "And perhaps Major Blake will keep me company. But don't be too long, and let us get some wraps first, for it's very damp with all this mist about."

While the two women were inside and the Belgian mooned up and down waiting for them, Blake thought it meet to get in a word of warning to his friend.

"She's got you going, Tony—but don't go in too deep."

Bad Luck turned on him a dark, astonished stare. "What the deuce do you mean, Bill?"

"Oh, nothing," Bill replied, squinting. "But don't go in too deep, that's all. You may have to swim home."

Anthony Tulloch looked as if he would have had great pleasure in pulling his best friend's nose, but fortunately at this moment Miss Vanne reappeared, swathed in a silky white shawl and looking ready for anything. They went off into the mists, the girl very slim and tall between the two men, and Blake noticed that Tony hardly dragged his leg at all. It was as if the limp had suddenly gone out of it.

The moment the party was out of hearing, Blake addressed his companion abruptly: "Miss Haviland, I am awfully worried about what you said this afternoon. Tony is my best friend. Tell me, do you really think Miss Vanne is just fooling?"

"I don't care to express any opinion on the matter, Major Blake," she replied rather stiffly. "Besides, I should think your friend is well able to take care of himself."

"Yes—I dare say he is—when he knows what he's up against. But he must know, or it wouldn't be fair. I can't let old Tony come a second purler over a woman!"

His evident sincerity touched Anne Haviland, and her face grew very grave in the moonlight.

"Then I think," she said slowly, "this visit to Portulloch should never have been arranged."

What can a man do when he wants like blazes to be alone with a woman, and another fellow, whose company she does not discourage, persists in being there too? It was an infuriating situation, and the more so to Anthony Tulloch in that he felt, rightfully or wrongfully, that the girl was using the other man's presence as a safeguard and a buffer.

She would never have dared to throw out the provokement and allure that Bad Luck felt her winding about him had they been alone together. She must have known that if she had, he would have possessed the right to take her in his arms and discover whether or not he had roused in her the same sweet madness as was beating in his veins. He realized suddenly that he had always wanted a woman like this, with the elements of mistress, wife, lover, mother, equally distributed, a vase containing both living wine and crystal water! It has been laid down by great thinkers that but for rare exceptions, there are only two types of women—the mother type, and the lover type. Anthony Tulloch knew in that hour that none but such a rare, rare one—half lily, half passion-flower—could fill his life, and he was tormented to find out for himself the composition of Narice Vanne's nature.

Every moment, too, she whipped him into a wilder curiosity and desire, using the Belgian's ubiquity as a gate over which she could lean to throw the arrows that tormented her victim, to hold out that cup, of contents uncertain, with lovely hands and mocking lips.

They had walked a mile by now, and come to where the railway spans the great Batoka Gorge, which is the highest bridge in the world, and where everyone goes to watch the rainbows. Leaning on the parapet, they stood gazing awhile at the unearthly radiance of the tinted arch that curved over the entire breadth of the Falls, its ends piercing to the dark water below—a sight almost stunning in its uncanny loveliness. But after a time it did not entirely satisfy the beauty-hunger burning in Narice Vanne. She wanted to get nearer, to feel herself caught in the glory of the rainbow itself, drenched in its radiance, drowned in its color.

“Let’s go down to the Rain Forest!” she cried feverishly. “We shall be closer there—right *in* it—a glorious experience to remember all one’s life!”

Now the Rain Forest is full of a fine spectral mist, composed of the spray from the Falls, that wets to the skin in no time, and calls for a mackintosh at least. None of them being properly attired for such an expedition, Bad Luck demurred a little, but only a very little, for he too thought it would be the experience of a lifetime, to walk with this alluring girl in the mysterious ghostliness of the forest.

Perhaps they were all slightly mad by now—the lunar rainbow sometimes has this effect on impressionable people. Certainly no one in his sane senses would have looked upon the Rain Forest as a cheery night resort, inhabited as it is by snakes and monkeys and various strange creatures that flit and dart and cry among the tall tree tops. But there was a spell on those three. Even the Belgian’s native caution failed him, and as for Bad Luck, whither Narice Vanne led he was willing to follow.

So down the sloping narrow glades they trod, nearer and nearer to the thunder of the great chasm. The moonlight began to lose its brightness, filtering only dimly through the covering trees, but the spray's wraithy light guided them. Shroudy forms seemed all about them, moving amidst the tree trunks and feathery, swaying fern fronds.

They had long since fallen silent. People rarely talk when nearing the Falls. There is something terrifically silencing in that majestic pageant of sound, but it is a silence in which there is no peace.

Both Anthony Tulloch and Narice Vanne felt this. As they moved through the shivering, rustling woods, the blood in their veins seemed to rustle and vibrate in unison with the mighty forces about them, and they became conscious of a terrible aliveness. Sometimes their shoulders brushed, once his hand touched hers, and a fine silver flame seemed to leap between them. Only for the presence of the Belgian, there might have been a conflagration of souls in that place of mirage, or a consecration of the poet's dream—perhaps both! As it was, madness of the senses found relief in taking strange risks.

Disregarding the wet, slippery ground underfoot, they penetrated to the very edge of the great gorge, and leaned perilously over to bathe in that wonderful light that never was on land or sea, and at the same time become drenched with the fine permeating spray. Narice, in spite of bounding pulses, a fever of excitement, became presently aware of a deadly chill in the air. She had not known that during the winter month of August, the temperature near the river often falls to freezing point. Anthony Tulloch, however, knew it well, and

would have thought of it before but for the mid-summer madness in his veins. Now he too felt the sudden change in the atmosphere and realized that he was exposing this lightly clad girl to the risk of serious illness.

"Come along at once!" he shouted above the roar of the waters. "*Marchons!*" And taking her arm firmly, he led the way back.

The Belgian, not to be outdone, took her other arm in a businesslike fashion, and they marched along briskly, all of them by now thoroughly chilled and wet through; but just as they reached the edge of the forest and were able to hear themselves speak once more, Narice, happening to glance at her wet and ice-cold hands, gave a cry:

"My ring—my ring! It must have slipped off somewhere as we came along!" She released herself from the men and half turned to go back, but Anthony Tulloch barred the way.

"You mustn't dream of going back. Besides, we should never find it by this light."

"But I wouldn't lose it for worlds!" she cried.

"And you shan't," he assured her. "If I have to rake every inch of the path we've come, I'll find it for you tomorrow."

"Oh—will you?" She turned her face, pale and lovely in the strange light, to his, and swiftly he drew close, for the Belgian, a few yards off, was striking matches and peering by the flicker of them along the dark path, and for one moment they two were alone.

"I'd rake the earth to put what they needed into these little hands," said Anthony Tulloch, catching them to his lips, and in that instant he felt her

trembling against him, thrilling, aflame as he was. "And for you, Narice," he whispered, and their lips drew nigh, but the Belgian chose that moment to turn back to them, and they fell apart.

"*Impossible de le retrouver!*" mournfully declared Monsieur Brunel.

"Impossible nothing!" said Anthony Tulloch boastfully. His heart sang aloud, the whole universe was his private possession. "I shall find it in the morning." A little sound from the girl brought him swiftly back to the material plane. Her teeth were chattering! "You're wet through!" Hastily he flung his coat round her and once more pulled her arm through his. "We must hurry back to the hotel like mad, or you'll be ill."

"I'm all r-r-r-right," she murmured faintly, but had indeed begun to shake and shiver uncontrollably all through her body.

The Belgian again grabbed her other arm, and they hurried her along at top speed back to the hotel. The gardens and verandas were deserted—not a soul about anywhere.

"Now, straight into a hot bath you go," Bad Luck commanded, relinquishing her. "Then to bed with a big dose of quinin and a glass of strong toddy. I'll send these things along to your room as soon as I can beat them up."

"Do you think I've g-g-got fever?"

"I hope not. Even so, you may dodge it if you strictly follow instructions. Good night."

"G-good night!" she chattered, and disappeared.

The Belgian also dispersed himself instantly, and Bad Luck sped on a tour of exploration. There was still a light in the kitchen, and after a good deal

of bossing around, the explorer managed to get boiling water and lemons. Of quinin, being an old Rhodesian, he had plenty in his pocket, while for the potable essence of a good toddy he knew Blake could be relied upon. The only question was—would he already be abed and asleep?

But no, there he sat in his room, whisky and glasses on a table before him, and pipe in mouth, though in his eyes was none of the calm peace of nicotine. In fact he looked as worried as a turkey with a tin chicken, and his greeting to Bad Luck wore an air of dark foreboding:

“Oh—*there* you are!”

“Why!” exclaimed the other gaily. “Did you think I’d tumbled over the falls?”

“There are worse tumbles than that, my boy.”

This mumpish rejoinder for some obscure reason heated Anthony Tulloch all up.

“Since when have you been wet-nursing me, Bill?” he rapped out curtly. “And what the devil do you mean by it?”

“I *knew* that was all the thanks I’d get,” said the lugubrious Bill.

“Yes, it is. However, I came here for whisky and not for back-chat. Miss Vanne has got the shakes, and so have I for the matter of that!”

He reached for the bottle and hurriedly fixed two raging glasses of strong drink, one for the patient, one for himself, his face wearing an uninviting scowl that it might have been foolhardy to ignore. But once Bill Blake was sure of the right course, he kept to it with the persistence of a hungry fly.

“I want to tell you something you won’t like, Tony.”

"Better not," the other replied on a warning note without looking up, but Blake stoically carried on.

"That girl only uses the title 'Miss' professionally, like an actress does. She is really *Mrs. Vanne*—a married woman."

Bad Luck finished mixing his drink, put it to his lips, drained it, and set the glass down before he spoke.

"Who told you that?" His voice was curiously composed, but the scar across his nose showed up as lividly as if it had just been put there with a paint-brush.

"Her friend Miss Haviland, who has known her for years." There was a silence, then the narrator continued heavily: "It appears that she and the husband led a cat-and-dog life and decided to part."

Another considerable silence, during which Anthony Tulloch flattened another drink. At last he said quietly:

"Ring the bell, Bill, and have the quinin and stuff taken to the lady's room."

He sat down again, and stared rather absently at the bottle on the table. Blake rang the bell once, and several more times, but to no purpose. Finally he took up the medicaments himself and departed, first to the notice-board in the hall to find out the number of Miss Vanne's room, then to her door at the end of a long corridor.

After a fair amount of knocking and waiting, he was rewarded by the arrival of Miss Vanne, not out of her bedroom, but from the direction of the bathroom. She came stumbling rather feebly along, wrapped in a blue dressing-gown, but the sight of Blake and his spirituous offering cheered her con-

siderably. She stood there in the corridor sipping it rapturously.

"This is a bracer!" she giggled. "I shall be thoroughly laced!"

"A jolly good job too. It's the only possible way to keep fever and chill out of the system," was the virtuously Rhodesian reply.

"I feel better already since I boiled myself, and this will probably put the finishing touch to my convalescence—or to me! It's most frightfully kind of you and Sir Anthony!"

She smiled lovely, misty violet eyes of gratitude out of a white face, and Blake felt a glow of mysterious pleasure as well as a tinge of remorse. But both sensations vanished rapidly and completely when he got back to his room and found his best friend, apparently unconscious of goings and comings, still sitting there staring before him at the bottle. He shied like a maniac when Blake's hand fell almost caressingly on his shoulder.

"Let's get to bed, old man."

"Let's get to Hell!" muttered Anthony Tulloch, and rising went unsteadily out of the room, dragging his leg.

"I hear that the medical supervision and comforts supplied to her left nothing to be desired," smiled Anne Haviland next morning, when they, all but one, met for eleven o'clock tea on the veranda. "Nevertheless, she is sporting a temperature, and there's nothing for her but a day or two in bed."

Commandante Brunel had reassumed his air of nostalgia; Anthony Tulloch had on his poker face, with a pair of flint eyes in it, and even Blake's

whimsical hardihood did not come quite up to form, but Anne Haviland's voice was soothing and serene, and "All her ways, like Death's, were calm and sweet." Neither did she seem inclined to let her friend's indisposition interfere with the projected visit to Portulloch, except to postpone it slightly.

"What I propose is that you go on ahead," she said, "and we'll follow as soon as Narice is better."

"A *bon plan*," agreed Blake heartily, "a very *bon plan*." Nevertheless, he fidgeted and cast a side-glance at Bad Luck.

"Except for today's part of it!" rejoined the Laird of Portulloch. "Why should we be bundled off in that cold-blooded fashion?"

"I don't believe Narice will get better while you are all about. Bed bores her, and she won't stay there if there's the least inducement to get up."

"I should like to see her again before we go," Bad Luck remarked quietly. "Just in case she changes her mind and doesn't come up to the ranch."

Blake looked sharply at those hard eyes, but Miss Haviland's laugh rippled lightly out.

"You've found out poor Narice's changeableness, Sir Anthony—but you mustn't rely on mine. I shall not let you off my visit, so I warn you."

"I don't want to be let off."

He looked at her steadily, and a most lovely wave of color swept into her face. "Perhaps it will be all right, after all!" Blake thought. "She'll get him over his jolt with the other girl!"

Abruptly the Belgian uttered some phrases in his weird English: "I shall go hon donight. I take de midnight train. But again first I vish do see Miss Vanne." He turned appealingly to Anne Haviland.

"I'm afraid you can't," she answered. "Impossible for her to get up with that temperature, even to say good-bye to you, Monsieur Brunel."

"Will you ask her, pliz?" he persisted. "It is ver', ver' important."

"Of course I will—but really . . ." She smiled doubtfully.

"It is *awful*," she remarked to Bad Luck a few minutes later, "the way Narice makes captives, and I have to go about cutting them loose afterwards, and pouring oil and wine on the bruises."

"A thankless task, I expect?"

They had strolled away from the veranda and the others, and naturally their feet took the only road there was to go—the one to the bridge. After all, there was little to be done in that part of the world but gaze at the Falls, either from the Rain Forest, the Palm Grove, or the bridge.

"Yes, indeed!" Anne sighed ruefully. "Somehow the victims always go away blaming me instead of Narice. Not that I mind much, as long as I succeed in giving a little comfort."

"I should think you might comfort a man for a good deal, Miss Haviland," said Anthony Tulloch with deliberation, and again had the gratification of seeing that fair face suffused with color.

"What an awfully kind thing to say!" she murmured. "I'm afraid it is undeserved. But I do try, because in my own life I have so much needed comfort—and got so little!"

"I'm sorry," he said gently. "One scarcely connects sadness with anyone so radiant."

She sighed, fell silent, then said enigmatically: "Some sit so carelessly to the Banquet of Life. Others get only the crumbs that fall."

His face darkened, and the scar showed up. The fires that had raged in him all night leaped out once more. "You're right!" he muttered. "Some 'spoil the bread and spill the wine' lightsomely enough!"

She glanced sadly at the fierce moodiness of his face, and made an effort to distract him. "Tell me," she said cheerfully, "do you *really* want us to come to your ranch? Won't it give an awful lot of extra trouble?"

"No trouble at all. There are plenty of servants—only native 'boys' of course, but well trained ones, and it's a fairly comfortable house as farm-houses go." (It happened to be the most luxurious in the country, but he was not the man to say so.)

"As long as I can have a little hut to hide in with my work for a few hours every day——" she began.

"You can have that, and everything else you want."

"Narice likes a place to herself too, though of course most of her painting is done out-of-doors."

"Of course." Bad Luck took out his cigaret case, proffered it, and lighted one for her before he added easily, "But I don't somehow think Miss Vanne means to come to Portulloch."

He was indeed pretty certain that she would not come, after the interview he intended to encompass with her before he left. The fragrant seductive memory of that "bunch of violets in the wind" drove him as a demon drives; and bitterness, disenchantment, disappointment of he knew not what exquisite dreams, ate him like an acid. He could think of nothing but revenge on that haunting, taunting woman.

When in the late afternoon Blake at a loose end and kicking his heels with impatience suggested that the launch was all shipshape for a start homewards, he was snarled at for his pains and told that *he* could go if he liked—and be damned to him! After which the Master of Portulloch disappeared from the hotel and did not turn up at dinner. It was almost nine P.M. when he suddenly limped onto the veranda, to be greeted with the news that Miss Vanne was so much better that she had yielded to Mr. Brunel's entreaties and consented to get up and say good-by to him.

"They are in our private sitting-room now," laughed Miss Haviland. "Poor Mr. Brunel almost in tears, and Narice sobbing too no doubt—but with boredom. She is one of those people who while far from suffering fools gladly, simply can't bring herself to say 'no' to them even when she means it."

Scarcely an admirable characteristic, though Anne Haviland described it more in fun than in caviling, and Bad Luck stood listening absently, leaning on his stick with an impenetrable expression on his face. He remarked briefly and quietly: "I think someone should rid her of the turbulent Belgian," and walked indoors.

He knew quite well where the sitting-room was situated, for he had made it his business to inquire first thing that morning, after getting in from his successful hunt for the lost ring. He had found it in the Rain Forest, almost at the very edge of the chasm, and it jingled in his pocket now, having been thrust there among loose sixpences and shillings. One swift summarizing glance at its solid

masculine make, its coat of arms on a raised shield, its engraved inscription inside:

To—N.
Heart of my Heart

had been enough, providing the extra twist of the knife that firmed up his decision to do as he had been done by.

As he reached the sitting-room door the Belgian came out of it, and there really were tears in his eyes, if Anthony Glenpatrick Tulloch had possessed curiosity enough to observe the fact. But he happened to be too much preoccupied with his own emotions. Pushing past the other man, and slamming the sitting-room door behind him, he faced the girl who had just risen from her chair and stood smiling rather shakily at him.

"Here's your ring!" he said abruptly, and came forward with it lying on his palm.

She reached for it with an exclamation of joy, but as she touched it his hand seized hers, and roughly and brutally he drew her close, held her face up and pressed his mouth down on hers. For at least three seconds he held her thus, in a grasp of iron and unpardonable violence, kissing her. No lover's embrace this, but an onslaught as fierce and cruel as it was sudden, and kisses that were like blows bruising her lips onto her teeth.

Gasping and trembling with outraged astonishment, she tried at first to utter her indignation against those savage lips, and to wrench herself free. Then she became still, and cold as ice in his arms, and at once he had finished. Suddenly and

swiftly as he had attacked, he now almost flung her from him.

"How dare you! How *dare* you!" She was white, with blazing eyes.

"How dare I—yes, how *dare* I?" he echoed the words with a furious rudeness and irony, his eyes as darkly agleam as her own, all the red-brown of his skin gone strangely sallow. With no other word, nothing but a hard derisive laugh, he turned and went from the room.

"I've had my revenge anyway," he muttered to himself as he slammed and stumbled his way down the corridor, dragging his game leg as if it had been made of iron, "and she a lesson she won't forget in eternity!"

Less than twenty minutes later, a native brought Blake a message that the launch only awaited his company to depart. Bad Luck, having accomplished such things as he had designed, was now ready to set his face for home.

Portulloch was one of the show places of Northern Rhodesia. The homestead, occupying the center of a raised plateau, had been built by Baker, the famous architect, on the same lines employed by the early Dutch builders—white-walled, gabled, green-shuttered, with wide stoops and tall chimneys. All round it lay scattered a wild garden, rich with the perfume of roses, and beyond that strayed the boundless rolling veld, a great sweep of colorful land with lazy violet hills crouching on the horizon.

Here, on the banks of the Kafue River, Bad Luck and Blake ran 5000 head of cattle and some

hundreds of pigs, and grew mealies and cotton. They had a bacon factory, and the most scientific and up-to-date of dairies. An Australian cattleman managed the beasts, and half a dozen young Englishmen took their share in the farm work in return for their training. It was not only the show farm of this part of the world, but the most hospitable one, and its doors stood open to welcome visitors.

It is true that the railway station was some twenty-five miles away, but a perfect fleet of motor-cars overcame this difficulty—hardy little cars of an undistinguished make, but of most excellent capacity to negotiate the roads. All Rhodesian roads are rough, but most especially when they broach the very fringes of the untamed jungle, as did the Portulloch estate.

What made the place so fascinating was that indoors you had all the luxurious comforts with which wealthy bachelors know how to surround themselves—a marvelous library full of deep chairs, priceless books, and the latest periodicals; a first-class billiard room; a dining-room set about with fine old benches, *armoires*, and tables from an ancient Spanish monastery; beds with box mattresses, Irish linen sheets, and frilled pillow-cases—yet as you lay so luxuriously abed, reading the last novel or the latest Nash, you might hear the roar of lions, the *oomph* of the wild dog, the stamped-ing hoofs of a herd of zebra 500 strong, and sometimes the distant trumpet of elephant. And in the morning, to greet you, one of those crashing dawns, of color and fire and dew!

No wonder Rupert Morrison, sent by Anne

Haviland to reconnoiter and report whether she would really be advised to come, and truly not likely to be in the way, wrote back so heartily:

"You will be in clover here, my dear Anne. I haven't known such a bed and such cooking since I left London, yet there is a freshness, a novelty about everything that will charm your heart. With the river at hand, and the forest at the very door, there is ripping sport on land and water. It is lovely game country and Tulloch has promised me a lion hunt before we leave. The agricultural side of the farm, too, is most interesting, plenty of jolly fellows about, and visitors always coming and going. You'll have lots to put into the book, so do hustle Miss Vanne up and come as soon as possible."

He read this aloud to his host before it was put into the post-bag, and Bad Luck kept an immobile countenance, while Blake felt in his pockets and made faces. Morrison could not be expected to know that relations were strained between Anthony Tulloch and Narice Vanne. Even Blake knew nothing of what had passed in the sitting-room that night, but he counted on Miss Haviland's beautiful and serene presence to drive away the devils of depression that were now Anthony Tulloch's daily companions.

But the hoped-for visitor tarried by the way. Miss Vanne, it seemed, took longer than expected to recover from her unfortunate go of malaria, and her friend would not leave her. However, at last came tidings: the invalid was on her feet again, but had definitely decided against any further incursion into Northern Rhodesia, so Anne Haviland was coming alone.

Blake hardly knew whether he felt relief most, or disappointment, but Bad Luck gave no sign of either, only of a firm intention that the one who had accepted should receive the most royal of welcomes. A tremendous scrabbling of preparation ensued.

Blake and Morrison were to go as escort, and Blake tried to persuade Luck to accompany them, but was met with a curt refusal. It appeared that the Laird of Portulloch was "fed" to bursting point with the outer world, and did not care if he never saw it again.

Not only that, but it was no use pretending that this lone-hand affair of one woman coming to stay was not a very different thing from the merry party that had been planned with Narice Vanne as the central figure. Miss Haviland might be, and was, a charming woman, but the whole affair had turned somewhat flat and tasteless. That was what Anthony Tulloch was feeling, and Blake knew it, for he felt the same himself.

Then, too, having one woman alone on the ranch was a precarious experiment. Possibly she, like the Vanne girl, might be more (or less) than she seemed. She also, on closer acquaintance, might eventuate into a book with certain pages stuck together, and not for public reading. And supposing Bad Luck got involved with her—fell in love—married her—and it did not turn out happily?

Such was the dismal trend of Bill Blake's mind all the way down in the train.

Afterwards he wondered whether this dark mood of his was an occult forewarning of the bad news towards which he was traveling, for on arrival at Livingstone he found a wire to say that his only

sister lay *in extremis* at the Cape. She was young and sweet and had come out to South Africa to be cured of the beginnings of tuberculosis, but results had not been good. The Cape southeasters seemed to have increased her malady, and now her husband in India had been telegraphed for, and Blake's message was that if he hoped to see her again he must come without delay.

The down train did not leave till midnight, and the intervening time was a nightmare, but fortunately there were a good many things to be stuffed into it, among them a letter of explanation to Bad Luck, and a trolley ride to the Falls. There were also Morrison and Miss Haviland to set upon the journey northwards, and afterwards he intended to find and have a talk with Narice Vanne, whom he had seen only for a few minutes at luncheon time. She proposed to stay on, painting, at the Falls, in spite of Anne Haviland's laughing remonstrances at being sent off unchaperoned to a stronghold of bachelors.

"You're not obliged to go," was the quiet reply.

"But I am, Narice. I feel it my duty to write up that wonderful ranch, and thereby induce hundreds of young Britishers to come out and start more wonderful ranches. Besides, I have a frank yearning for a spell of home comforts after the endless hotels and train traveling that have been our lot."

"That's all right. As long as you admit it *is* the flesh-pots that lure you—and don't pretend that it's art."

Narice Vanne's tone had been dry, her eyes austere when she said it, and Blake felt slightly astonished. In fact he was utterly unprepared to see the

change the last two weeks had wrought in her. Fever has a way of knocking people sideways for a while, but a short bout of it should not be enough to turn a healthy girl into a ghost, with shadows lurking round her eyes, and faintly hollowed cheeks. Her manner, too, was subtly changed. Laughter seemed to have dried up in her. Most of her time was spent wandering about the Falls and on the edges of the gorge, and she was rarely seen except at meal times.

"I'm going to try for three good pictures before I leave," she told Blake when, after the others had gone, he sought her out in the Palm Grove, "and of course I must stay here to get them. It would be folly to go away."

"Portulloch would have done you a lot of good." Blake knew it was foolishness to persist on this subject, but her dimmed brightness moved him more than he could express. He longed to get things straightened out again, and bring back happiness to her eyes.

"It would have been folly," she repeated. "Besides, I must do my job—follow my star, such as it is!" She stared at her canvas with somber, dissatisfied eyes. "To say nothing of earning my living. I am not a rich woman, like Anne."

"Rich!" echoed Blake, much surprised.

"Oh, well—what I call rich. She's got several thousands of pounds anyway, and has never had to live from hand to mouth like I do." She was silent a moment, making little flicks and dabs at her canvas, then added with rather a wan smile: "On the other hand, she cannot claim with me the exquisite freedom of the wild ass."

"Are you so free—and is it so exquisite?" said Blake slowly. He was thinking of her husband, and perhaps she was too then, for a faint color came into her cheeks.

"I have only one tie in the world, and I do not let that bind me too much."

"I believe you!" thought Bill Blake cynically, but he only said inquisitively, "What do you think of all the time you're at work?"

"Oh, lots of things—and I add couplets to my Ballad of Life. Here are my two latest:

"Life's a swindler—jew it,
Life's a bank-note—blew it.
Life's a wild rose—smell it,
Life's a hell-cat—bell it."

She laughed, but it was only the ghost of her happy, ringing laughter of old.

Blake was detained down country for over a month, during which time his sister Pearl Trafford crept unexpectedly but slowly back from the gates of death, and at the end of a few weeks was able to be removed to the Karoo, where the high fine air is of inestimable value to "lungy" people. Having installed her in a sanitarium there, with her husband, now arrived from India, in charge, her brother was at length able to think of his own affairs and consider a return to Rhodesia.

Bad Luck had been in constant touch with him, and from the unwontedly cheerful tone of his letters, there was only one theory to be deduced. Miss Haviland's visit to the ranch was proving an unmitigated success. And that there was even more to it

than that, Blake had a pretty shrewd premonition, so that the portentous news which reached him by letter on the last day of his stay did not altogether stagger him with surprise. But it filled him with a curious sense of unease. He had felt it coming all along, had even given it a shove onwards himself, yet now that it had come to pass, it seemed unreasonably soon, unconsidered, almost dangerously precipitant.

"... Miss Haviland has done me the great honor . . . We shall be married quite soon . . . The settlements are being fixed up at Bulawayo."

"Pretty nippy work, by Jove!" ruminated Billy Blake. "And why 'settlements'? Shouldn't have thought a woman who had managed to collar Anthony Tulloch would worry much about settlements!"

But that was just where he slipped up in his judgment of women. Settlements, it seemed, were never out of place, however charming the woman or eligible the man. Anyway, that was what his sister laughingly told him. He was glad he had got the news in time to talk it over with Pearl and Tim, who were close friends of Bad Luck, and both deeply intrigued by the forthcoming match.

"Is it the Anne Haviland who writes travel books?" asked Pearl. "There was one about Russia, another on America, India, and so forth."

"I believe so, yes, though I can't say I've ever read any of her priceless works myself."

"India! Yes, of course." Tim had been wrinkling his already much sun-wrinkled forehead. "But wasn't there quite a good scandal about that lady in Calcutta at the time?"

"Scandal!" Blake gazed at his brother-in-law like a petrified man.

"Something about an engagement to a wealthy youngster who mysteriously got shot just before the ceremony?"

"Sounds pretty hard lines on them both!"

"On him certainly. But if I remember rightly, *she* came out of it with twenty thousand pounds' insurance money, which he'd settled on her. That was the scandal, you see. The insurance people put up a kick."

"Rather a queer sort of story!" A bleak expression came into the face of Anthony Tulloch's best friend. "Are you *sure* of your facts, Tim?"

"It was a queer story, I'm sure of that at least, but of course it may not be the same woman—probably isn't. Tony would hardly fall for the adventuress type. Yet"—he frowned thoughtfully—"the name seems to stick in my head somehow."

"When did this highly romantic episode occur?"

"About June, 1914. I remember because I was in Calcutta at the time, and there was a lot of talk about it. Then of course came the war, and the story got swamped in the general rumpus. However, it would be quite easy to dig up facts, if anyone wanted them, because of the lawsuit. The insurance company fought like tigers, but the lady won and got away with the boodle."

"Most interesting," commented Blake, squinting fearsomely. "I think I should like the official data, Tim, if you can get them."

"Right-ho! I'll drop a line to old Quentin at Goona. He was mixed up in the case, being an old friend of the youngster's family."

Upon which unsatisfactory enough arrangement Blake departed for the north, but it didn't make his journey of eighteen hundred-odd miles any pleasanter to have this story popping in and out of his mind all the way. Not that he really considered it likely to have been Anne Haviland. And not that it was anything seriously against a woman if she had benefited by a man's death. After all, that kind of thing happened innocently enough every day in the week.

Still—there had been something fishy. Tim had been pretty emphatic on that point—and the lawsuit! Such things didn't harmonize well with Anthony Tulloch's clean record and fine old family name. That was his pal's opinion at any rate, and the result was a wearisome, worrisome journey on the train.

At Bulawayo more surprises awaited him. The first man he ran into at the Grand was Rupert Morrison, and the first news he heard was that Miss Haviland had left Kafue and arrived back at the Falls Hotel. In answer to his flabbergasted stare, Morrison's face assumed a slightly prim expression.

"Hardly what you'd call *comme il faut* if she'd remained at Portulloch under the circumstances."

"*Comme il faut*—my Lord!" stuttered Blake. "Is *that* what we've fallen to?"

"I don't understand you." Morrison spoke stiffly. "My cousin happens to belong to a world where the *convenances* are respected."

"*Convenances!*" Blake was grinning like a Cheshire cat in pain. "We don't use 'em out here—one of the advantages of living on the veld—yet somehow we manage to live pretty clean."

Morrison smiled in a conciliatory fashion. "Why, of course, my dear fellow, *entendu*." He seemed to have grown very Gallic all at once; still, he evidently meant only to be amiable. He repeated, with perhaps a faint tinge of irony: "Understood that you are all above reproach, morally and socially. As for Tulloch, not a nicer fellow living. Still, there *are* certain worldly customs to be observed, and if Anne prefers to observe them by being down at the Falls with Miss Vanne until she's married—well, I don't see why you should object."

"When's the kick-off to be?"

"I believe the wedding date is not yet actually fixed."

"Well, I'll go and have a drink anyway," Blake decided glumly, and did not ask Morrison to join him. He felt a sudden distaste for that smooth-surfaced man of *convenances*.

This was perhaps slightly unjust, as he was more than half inclined to think himself, after three gins with lime and soda. And at a later stage of his journey, when he sat on in the Falls Hotel veranda with Anne Haviland and watched "the smoke that sounds," he almost recanted altogether. She was so sweetly, radiantly happy, so serenely sure that her leaving the ranch to come down here was the only possible thing to do in the circumstances.

"And of course," she said, blushing adorably, "there is nothing to prevent Tony coming down as often as he likes to see me."

"Nothing but two hundred and sixteen miles," replied Blake dryly.

"It *is* a good distance, but I don't think that's

what keeps him away." She hesitated, then added wistfully, "Such a pity he doesn't care for Narice."

So that was it. Bad Luck was keeping away, and would keep away until his wedding-day, on account of that slim, dark silhouette of a girl coming up the veranda towards them now. Narice Vanne had plainly regained her health; there was color in her cheeks and lips once more, and vigor had come back to her swift, swinging walk. But the violet eyes held a strange look of sadness, and the smile with which she greeted Blake seemed to accentuate it. She shook Blake's hand warmly, and with a touch of her old gaiety.

"I'm so glad you got back before I went. I've finished my two pictures of the Falls, and am working now on a last one of the gorge. As soon as that's done, I shall trek. But I want your opinion of them first, and——" She hesitated, then under cover of the rather boisterous arrival of Nibby Brookes, with a bull pup, added quickly, "And I want a word with you, Major Blake."

This wish, however, was not to be gratified immediately, for Anne Haviland never left them alone for a moment, until the time came for Blake to resume his journey homewards. Even then, they all accompanied him to the station, and but for the accident of Nibby Brookes' bull pup starting to worry Anne's skirt, and the consequent fuss of getting it away from him, Blake and Narice could not have exchanged a single sentence. She snatched the opportunity rather breathlessly.

"There's something I want to say—yet I don't know if I can. After all, it is not my business, and it's so mean to give away another wom——" She

stopped, and Blake stared at her keenly. There was a look of terrible earnestness in her face, and a haunting ghost looked out of her eyes.

"Is it Tony?" he asked quickly. "Something he ought to know?"

Hot red anger came into her face. "He doesn't deserve to be warned."

"Oh, yes, he does!" said Blake firmly, like a man saying his creed. "If you think Tony a rotter, you never made a bigger mistake."

But Anne having rescued her skirt, rebuked Nibby and turned towards them. Narice had only time to utter a low, cryptic phrase:

"They are not playing fair with him."

"That beastly puppy!" Anne joined them, looking sharply from one to the other.

A whistle blew, the train began to move, and Blake had to leap for it, but leaning from the window he called significantly to Narice Vanne: "I shall be down specially to see you next Monday."

For an accepted lover and happily expectant bridegroom, Anthony Tulloch's general demeanor was somewhat disappointing and lacking in *joie de vivre*. Blake had, in fact, never known him more morose, even during that ticklish period when there was a threat of his leg being amputated at the thigh. He was of course genuinely glad to see Blake back. Their friendship was too old to need demonstration, or get it, but his gloom lighted up very little, and all the sweet messages from beautiful Anne at the Falls were received with a dark inscrutability. As for his engagement, all he had to say about it was:

"Too bad you were away while she was here, Bill. Portulloch has never been so merry."

"Well, perhaps I may still have an opportunity of enjoying the old place under a new régime—unless you want me to quit, Tony?"

"Quit? Don't talk through your topper, Bill. You and Portulloch and I are inseparable."

Which was highly gratifying to Bill, of course. But he couldn't help wondering whether Portulloch's prospective mistress would think otherwise. Not that it mattered, for Bill Blake had no intention of living in anyone's pocket, and on that vast acreage there was room enough for everybody.

"I suppose you'll be going home for a bit after the wedding?"

Anthony Tulloch shrugged slightly. "She must decide that. I am entirely in her hands."

It didn't sound very ardent. Yet from all accounts he had been ardent enough, and gay enough too, during Anne Haviland's visit. It was only after the engagement was announced, followed by her speedy departure, that his old dejection had seized and sunk him, that he had taken to shutting himself up for hours at a time, and that when he did come forth, it was with a mood sadly lacking in sweetness and light. The other men on the ranch commented freely upon the change for the worse of his temper.

"If you ask me, our precious Bad Luck will prove no mild and amiable Benedick."

"The goddess at the Falls is going to get a bad deal. Gad, if she could only see and hear him first thing in the morning!"

"'Lord help the mon that's chained to oor Davy,' as the old woman said!"

Thus the bunch of rapsallion and irreverent

"younger sons" who ornamented life at Portulloch, and entertained themselves and others by learning to raise cattle and grow cotton. To all of which Bill Blake retorted:

"Oor Davy's all right, and you're a lot of indecent and undiscerning Hottentots."

But in his heart he was troubled, troubled. Life had been so pleasant, and, bar an occasional bad mood, Anthony Tulloch so content up here on the banks of the Kafue before these women came barging in! Not that he resented Anne Haviland if she was all right and on the square; if she was going to understand and cherish and comfort broken, moody Bad Luck, who had so much that was big and fine in his nature. It only required the *right* woman to drive away the black vultures.

Blake remembered in what high hope he had first visioned that picture, with Narice Vanne as its central figure. But the picture had soon smudged and gone to smash. He himself had helped in the smashing, by relating the story of Miss Vanne's marriage. That was when the trouble began. That had torn it. Tony had never been the same man since the night of the Rain Forest. Narice Vanne was the storm-center—Anne Haviland only a little side tempest. The engagement was no more than a rebound from one woman to another.

It was all as clear as mud, and it wouldn't wash. Even if Anne Haviland was true blue all through, it wouldn't wash. And was she true blue? What about this murky story from India? Refutation or verification of that would soon come from Tim, but would it come in time? And what about those somber warning words of Narice Vanne's? "*They*

are not playing fair with him." Something sinister in that. A hint, if nothing worse, of underground workings against Anthony Tulloch's peace of mind.

It was not for the sake of idle gossip that that girl had dragged those words out of herself. She had done it against her own will, from a sense of fair play only. She might be a faithless wife and a flirting jade, but there was a strange ring of truth and sincerity about the things she said. Anyway, this had to be looked into. He must find out too, with some certainty, how much time there was still to run before the irrevocable came to pass.

"You ought to give a fellow some idea of the date of the wedding, Tony," he remarked, when on the point of leaving to keep his appointment with Narice Vanne. "There is rice to be bought, and what not. I must get me a pair of spats too."

"Spat? Rice? Are you up the pole, Bill?"

"No good wedding is replete without rice, and spats on the best man," gravely asserted the man cast for that office. "Bet you Morrison will be wearing a pair. By the way, what is that sportsman doing down in Bulawayo, I wonder?"

"As a matter of fact he's fixing up those marriage settlements on my behalf. Of course I shall have to go down and sign when they're all ready, but meanwhile he's saving me a lot of trouble. You know how I loathe business."

"I ought to, seeing that I've conducted most of it for you all these years up till now," said Blake somewhat dryly, and Bad Luck was quick to suspect a note of reproach in the remark.

"Of course I'd have asked you to attend to it, Bill," he said warmly, "if you hadn't happened to

be away. As it was, Morrison seemed the next best man to take it on. After all, he's Miss Haviland's only living relative."

"I didn't know that."

"Yes, it is so, and very natural therefore that he should want her future safety fixed up as far as money is concerned."

"Surely her future is safe enough with you as her husband?"

"Oh, you never know what might happen after—or even *before* that comes to pass," said Anthony Tulloch carelessly, and Blake had a sudden sensation as of something cold stealing round his heart, something like the point of a knife, or the nosing of a bullet. But he knew that he would never have had this feeling but for the Indian story which even yet might be refuted, so he only said rather unsteadily:

"I suppose it was Morrison put that into your head?"

"As a matter of fact it was—and quite rightly. After all, if one cares enough to ask a woman to marry, one should care enough to endow her with one's worldly goods, to enjoy whether one is alive or dead."

So that was that—and quite sufficient to go on with! It kept Bill Blake's mind lugubriously busy from Kafue to Livingstone anyway, and he began to wonder if he was ever again to have a railway journey free of sickening problems and forebodings.

At the Falls, however, he was cheered by the usual bustle that never failed to hail his advent. In the hotel Major Blake was ever the most welcome guest, for his arrival heralded that of other guests

from Livingstone and surrounding districts, merry parties and special menus. His friend the chef came rushing out, his friend the barman produced his favorite drink straight off the ice, and his friend the manager pressed for his society. But Blake's most pressing need after a gin and lime-juice was to find Miss Vanne. The manager reported her to have gone off as usual on a painting expedition, but he also reported that she had been followed about an hour later by Miss Haviland and Morrison carrying a thermos full of tea. Morrison, it appeared, had arrived from Bulawayo the night before.

This information gave the tracker pause. He did not particularly want the company of the other two during his interview with Narice. In fact, they would be most confoundedly *de trop*. And on the veld with nothing about you but earth and sky, it is not so easy to get rid of *de trop* people. He decided to wait upon events awhile, and chance their returning alone. And sure enough, he presently spied his game—Rupert Morrison and Miss Haviland coming up at a tidy pace, considering the heat, from the direction of the bridge—and strolled forward to meet them. As soon as they got within speaking distance Anne called out blithely:

"It's no good. She refuses the company of all and sundry."

"But I've come by special request," protested Blake, shaking hands, and piercing her with his gimlet eye.

"I know," laughed Anne, "but she's repented that and doesn't want you now—not before luncheon anyway. She told us to tell you so if we met you."

"It seems she is putting the finishing touches to her masterpiece," said Morrison, "and resents interruption. But I tell you what, Blake, it *is* going to be a masterpiece, if that's any consolation to you."

"Consolation be blowed!" grumbled Blake. "She invited me to fill the rôle of art critic, and I'm going to."

"Right-ho!" Morrison shrugged, smiling. "Your blood be on your own head."

But Anne said more seriously: "Really, I wouldn't go, Major. You don't know what it means to be interrupted when one is at good work. Nothing more infuriating. And after all, she's promised to be back to luncheon. You'll only have to wait another hour or so."

It certainly seemed a little unreasonable to persist under the circumstances, and Blake allowed himself to be persuaded, and walked back to the hotel with them.

A train load of people had just arrived, tourists and what not from down country, including some friends of Blake's with a red-hot scandal from Salisbury; a Russian Royalty in exile; a great American politician; and a dancer known to all the world. It was easy enough to fill in the next hour agreeably, but disappointment came at luncheon time, for Narice Vanne did not keep her promise to return. Even by tea time she had not materialized, and Blake's mood passed from a slight impatience to irritation and a sense of being "sold."

"She's trying to dodge me," he concluded, and was the more determined to get out of her what she knew. "She'll find she can't backslide on me!" he promised grimly. And presently, very unob-

trusively, he managed to get away from the others and slip off quietly towards the river.

He knew she would be somewhere along the edges of the gorge, but had no idea of her base of operations and could only make his way diligently along the south bank until almost within reach of the Rain Forest. Having no luck in that direction, he retraced his steps and crossed the bridge to the north bank. There at last he struck the trail if not the actual quarry. In a lovely spot sheltered by frondy ferns and palms, he found her painting equipment and the perfect little gem she had been putting onto a two-foot by three-foot canvas. A marvelous view of that giant cleft known as the gorge, with the mist of the Falls above, and below, the river, so swift and deep and sinister, yet sluggish as lava, stealing between the mighty walls.

He stood for some minutes lost in admiration and amazement that she could have got such beauty onto that little canvas, then fell once more to the consideration of her whereabouts. Beside her canvas stool stood a luncheon basket, which he had the curiosity to look into, with a view to finding out if she really had meant to return for luncheon. Curiosity was rewarded by surprise. Not only had she brought luncheon with her in the basket, but there it still was—a good-sized packet of sandwiches, a banana, an apple, and a bottle of lemonade. Yet here at five-thirty P. M., it remained unconsumed!

He felt both puzzled and annoyed. It was clear that her intention had been to lunch out, in spite of what she had said to Anne and Morrison. He could only come to the conclusion that this was on account of her having repented her impulse to tell him

what he insisted on knowing. She was deliberately dodging him! That did not, of course, explain why she had not eaten her luncheon, but perhaps he would find that out when he found her; for she did not know Bill Blake if she thought he was to be put off as easily as that.

Diligently he set out once more on the hunt. Dusk was beginning to fall, but that was all the more reason why she could not evade him much longer, for she must return soon to collect her impedimenta and go back to the hotel. Certainly she was nowhere on the south bank, for he had thoroughly combed it. Remained only that narrow track of thinnish bush known as the Knife Edge, but by the time he had carefully traversed this and returned, it was nearly dark.

Then his irritation altered subtly and swiftly to a sharp uneasiness, and suddenly, without admitting to himself the why and wherefore, he found himself returning at top speed to the hotel. The manager met him in the veranda, a few hasty sentences were exchanged, the police were telephoned to, and in another twenty minutes a search-party had been organized. Nothing was said to the other inmates of the hotel, but a matter of this kind cannot be kept dark, and the news soon flew round at the furious pace of a bush fire.

At nine o'clock that evening Narice Vanne was still missing, and almost every man, woman and native in the place had joined in the search. The Livingstone police having been notified, they came down in a body which included Nibby Brookes, the Blood-Orange and half a dozen other fervent ad-

mirers of the missing girl, and the hunt went on all night. There were men among them with eyes like hawks' that nothing could escape, one would say, but eyes that looked in the dawn of the next day significantly blank.

For there was only one conclusion to come to. Narice Vanne had somehow, somewhere, got over the edge of the gorge and into the Zambezi. Whether it was into the whirlpool, the Boiling Pot, or straight down the Knife Edge, the result was bound to be the same. Even supposing the actual fall had not proved fatal, down there no one could survive long. The strongest swimmer could not cope with the power and swiftness of that dark river, so secret and so far.

The basaltic sides of the gorge are almost sheer, and no one ever attempts to scale them, chiefly because the river below flows so close to the sides, with no foothold anywhere except an occasional jagged point of rock. Parts are densely mossed with ivies, ferns and lianas, and these in turn as densely inhabited by myriads of birds to whom it has been sanctuary from time unknown. At rare spots there exists the slightest of gradients down these precipitous sides, where indeed the thick undergrowth might offer handhold. But imagination mocked at the hope that any woman could cling precariously there through all the hours that had now elapsed since Narice Vanne first disappeared. Besides, peer who might, there was no sign down that gaping chasm of riven rock of any living creature save the birds.

Police attention had been attracted to a spot on the northern bank, not far from the deserted easel

and stool, where a branch of a bush leaning over the gorge had been snapped off, the loose earth scuffled, and the grass trampled flat. But this was not observed till dawn, and it seemed most probable that these surface disturbances had been made by some of the many amateur sleuths.

Amateur or professional, they had to give it up at last, and come reluctantly to the conclusion that the quest was vain. A terrible sense of helplessness and uselessness settled upon all in that dawn hour. Women who had joined ardently in the search were crying with exhaustion as well as despair. The policemen remained fiercely silent. Blake had never felt so futile, so pigmyish in his life. Anne Haviland, after showing a feverish activity for the first few hours, gave way just after midnight to desperate weeping, and had to be sent to bed in a state of collapse. Morrison, whose diligence appeared inexhaustible, looked thoroughly washed out and done for, though continuing to respond almost automatically to any fresh suggestion or direction. But truth to tell, suggestion and direction were expended. Even though the search continued all through the following day, the secret verdict of the police had long since been muttered among themselves:

“Not a hope. The river has got her.”

Then Anthony Tulloch turned up. Blake never knew what induced him, as soon as he realized on Monday evening that the girl was lost, to send a wire to Portulloch apprising his friend. It might merely have been that it was almost second nature with him to share every sensation and excitement

with Anthony Tulloch, yet it had seemed somehow the work of a Power outside himself that caused him to walk into the telegraph office and pencil down certain words:

"Miss Vanne lost, fear she has fallen over gorge and been drowned."

Having performed this act almost mechanically, he forgot about it, or rather it lost itself in the searching, peering, tramping phantasmagoria of the hours that followed: the long nightmare of flickering lanterns, hurrying feet, agitated voices; the cold hopelessness of the dawn; and then the new day of dreary goings to and fro.

It was during an interval snatched for a hasty meal, standing with a couple of others, sandwich and glass in hand, at the hotel bar, that he saw Bad Luck coming along with such a surprising spring in his gait that it was hard to believe him the possessor of a crock leg. The incident of the telegram returned to Blake's memory.

"We haven't found her," he said mechanically.

"And never will," appended Mundell of the police, gloomily. "Once you're over that blighted gorge, your name is mud. What do you say, Bad Luck?"

But Bad Luck appeared to have no comments to offer. He merely, with the concentrated air of a thoroughly thirsty man, flattened an out-size drink and wolfed a sandwich at top-gear. He must have come down from Kafue top-gear too, for according to train schedule, the thing seemed almost impossible. There were one or two inquiries about this, but Bad Luck was not doing any explaining either, at this season. His complexion, as highly colored

as is usual with men of Scotch blood—especially when they live in Rhodesia—seemed to have toned down a shade, his eyes, nondescript until they were fixed on something, had become like still water with a searchlight at the back of them. He was a non-committal Scotchman. You never knew what he was thinking about, or what he was going to do, but when he looked like that, Bill Blake was aware that “things would shift,” as the saying is.

And sure enough, within a few minutes of picketing a couple of drinks and sandwiches, he had disappeared as rapidly and unobtrusively as he came, taking no one with him except Gundaan, a native boy whom he had brought down, and who was renowned for his capabilities as a black-tracker. The next news was that Gundaan had *found something* at the spot already under suspicion of being the actual scene of the accident. When Blake came up to them, both white man and native were flat on their stomachs, their heads over the gorge, Bad Luck raking every inch of the precipitous sides through a pair of powerful field-glasses, and Gundaan making strange grunts and muttering beside him. Suddenly Anthony Tulloch leaped up and called for rope—miles of it, the thickest and strongest to be found in the place, and people went racing upon this errand, others rushing up to be assigned a task, and the edge of the gorge crowding over once more with men and women, anxious, breathless, trembling with fear of tragedy, eager and praying for a miracle.

Nothing less than a miracle it surely was that in the falling dusk of late afternoon Anthony Tulloch’s eye, directed by Gundaan and abetted by the best racing glasses in Rhodesia, should have

glimpsed far down the vast deeps of the gorge, amidst the mossy fernery and heavy growths that clung to the face of the rock, just a flicker of something that seemed foreign to that region of majestic gloom. It might only have been the under-side of a bird's wing as it flew to its nest, or the pale leaf of some sunless plant stirring in the evening breeze!

But, lest it should be what they hoped, the faint wave of a woman's hand, or what they feared, a torn scrap of a woman's dress fluttering from a bush, a dozen men were eager and ready to essay the gorge. But Anthony Tulloch had not come from Kafue merely to look on other men's feats, and he told them so pointedly, and very briefly, because there was no time to waste in arguing about it.

Only enough rope had been found to send down one man; what there was of it did not look too stout and was certainly not strong enough to bear two men—whether it could even stand the added weight of a woman's body was problematical, but that risk had to be taken. If by any chance Narice Vanne still lived after being for thirty-six hours down the gorge, there was not a moment to be lost, and Bad Luck made no delay in getting the rope about his body and himself over the side.

Others had to be content with the less dangerous though not less important business of manipulating the rope to prevent its being sawed by the sharp edge of the cliff, the concentration of as much artificial light as possible down the line of descent, and the preparation to receive whatsoever might presently emerge from that dim abyss. Whether it would be a drowned or dying woman, or merely the flotsam and jetsam of what had once been the

lovely *cadre* of a soul, none dared speculate. They could only lie peering over the surface, minds sick with apprehension.

The waiting was fearful. It seemed years before there came a far-off shout, and the signal for hauling up. Then only, a whispered certainty went round: the weight on the rope was greater, the strain almost twice as much as it had been. Followed another tense period of anxiety, added to the muscle-cracking efforts of the haulers. At last the rope's cargo came into sight, and it could be dimly descried that Anthony Tulloch held in his arms a white, bundled crumple of draperies!

Relief and fear mingling dried the throats and blurred the eyes of those who waited. In dread silence, broken only by the creakings of the rope, the burden came up to the surface and was hauled over by strong, eager hands. Anthony Tulloch stood amongst them once more, the light of the lanterns and torches playing on his set features, and on that creature with drowned face and drenched hair that he supported. They were almost afraid to look and see what terrible things death had done to her, and the strange silence of her rescuer held them dumb as they crowded around.

Then suddenly the incredible, unthinkable, unbelievable truth was realized—that form, limp and drooping like a thing broken on the wheel, drenched and draggled as a tempest-torn flower, that girl who had been hanging for thirty-six hours above almost certain death, not only was alive and conscious, but—the vitality of her; the sheer stark pluck!—she was smiling at them! Throats relaxed at last in

shouts and cheers of triumph; women sobbed and fainted, men unbound the ropes, and supporting arms were reached out; hot bottles, rugs and a stretcher were rushed forward to receive her exhausted body, and as they laid her tenderly on it, actually a little dry rustling laugh came from her stiff lips, and words.

"So much water! How I longed for a little whisky to mix with it!"

Laughter flowed all round her at that, but subdued and mingled with tears. A dozen flasks were held out, but feebly she shook her head. Bad Luck's flask had already done its work of revival for her down there. There was one more little whispered phrase from the ghost-white lips:

"I certainly had a unique view of the Falls!"

With eyelids fluttering and closing, she fell back among the pillows and lay still, and in silence they carried her back to the hotel.

It soon became known that Narice Vanne had sustained no more serious physical injury than the multitudinous cuts and scratches incidental to a fall down 350 feet of rock and tangled growths; but she was in a state of severe collapse due to strain and exposure, and there was loss of memory. It appeared that she could not account for being found in the gorge, nor remember anything from the time that she sat painting at her easel until Anthony Tulloch dragged her from the bush into which she had crashed and stuck.

"My mind has shut down on everything that happened before that, and I don't suppose I shall ever remember, so please don't ask me," she faintly

pleaded to the doctor, the nurse and Anne Haviland, standing around her bed. And they did not press her further, for there was horror and stress in her eyes.

In fact, the doctor gave strict injunctions that no further mention was to be made to her of the subject, but the nurses had their work cut out to prevent it, for the whole population of Northern Rhodesia seemed to be waiting on the mat to congratulate her on being alive at all. It seemed indeed a marvel and a mystery that tended to develop into a world sensation. Newspapers cabled from all parts of the globe for a "story," and journalists and reporters arrived by every train on the chance of getting a glimpse of the heroine, and an account straight from her lips of how it all happened. But Doctor "Elephant" James of Livingstone was the man for them; a man who had won his nickname not only because of his six feet three inches and great weight, but because of the power and shrewdness that lay behind a playfully sardonic manner. He proceeded to install his patient in a secluded quarter of the hotel, fencing her round with nurses trained to bite.

"It's the only way to get her well," he told Blake, in whom he had always recognized a man of similar kidney to himself. "She's got a fine constitution, but what she's undergone would knock out an ox. Even Miss Haviland's visit to her was a mistake. I let her in on account of their close association, but it upset the patient and put her back by weeks, and I'm not going to have it happen again while I'm in charge of the case. And I intend to stay in charge. Mr. Vanne has cabled

me funds and instructions from home, and is now on his way out. I didn't gather whether he was father or brother. Do you know, Bill?"

"No," said Bill and was mum on the subject of husbands, but inquisitive enough to inquire, "Have you told her?"

"I'm telling her *nothing*," was the reply. "That girl's thinking apparatus needs to be in cold storage for a spell."

Wherefore the journalists, with the exception of a few who hung on hopefully, had to go empty away, or with only such stories as they could concoct from accounts given by eye-witnesses. To their chagrin, the chief witness and actor of the rescue had very politically and promptly put 261 miles between himself and inquisition, leaving instructions with Blake that enterprising and uninvited visitors to Portulloch would have their brains knocked out on sight. He had no objection, however, during the days that followed, to the perambulations of Blake between Kafue and the Falls in the joint rôle of buffer and newsmonger.

Anne Haviland, too, constantly used the latter as her courier. Even though she wrote daily to her affianced husband there were still many messages that letters apparently could not deliver, especially when after a week or so Bad Luck suddenly went off into the veld with Gundaan, and no one knew what direction he had taken. Perhaps it was rather casual of him, considering the rapid approach of his wedding-day, but it may merely have been that he did not realize how close upon him was that auspicious date.

Blake had no idea of it either until Anne in-

formed him that the ceremony was fixed for November 2. This was on October 22; the accident to Narice had occurred just ten days earlier. Everything was in readiness as far as Anne was concerned. Only the documents at Bulawayo still remained to be signed by Bad Luck.

"I don't suppose the tiresome things really matter in the least," she told Blake with a weary little air. "But Rupert is fussing about them, and as he is my legal guardian I can't gainsay him."

"Tony had every intention of going down on that business to Bulawayo, I know," replied Tony's fidus Achates, "but he's an absent-minded devil and I suppose hasn't realized how short the time is. This accident to Miss Vanne has managed to knock us all a bit sideways."

"Don't talk of it! And Tony was so wonderful! But it was a little unkind of him to rush off so early next day that I hadn't a chance to thank him for saving her."

"He's a modest beggar—I don't suppose *she* will ever get the chance either."

"Narice? Oh no! I . . ." Anne's voice faltered and fell. "I don't think she even realizes that she *was* saved." She turned to him appealingly. "Oh, Major Blake, I am dreadfully worried about her! So worried that I wouldn't dream of going away if I didn't know she was under the care of those who can do far more for her than I."

"There's nothing to worry about, my dear lady. James tells me she is going on quite satisfactorily. It's only a question of time."

Anne shook her head. "I believe her mind is unhinged, poor darling," she murmured tragically.

"Nonsense!" remonstrated Blake. "You mustn't get such ideas into your head."

Anne shook her head again. "I haven't told anyone else, Major—but remember that I have seen and spoken to her since she's had time to get rested and composed—and I'm certain she's changed mentally."

"But the doctor assures me——" began Blake, though in spite of himself misgivings began to creep into his mind. However, he wasn't going to admit this to pale and shaken Anne Haviland, looking at him with eyes full of tears. Not that anything he said could alter her convictions.

"I know her better than any of you," she persisted, "and I see a change that I cannot define. She's *lost* something."

"She's lost nothing," said Blake firmly, "except a few days out of her life, and by way of compensation, as she said herself, gained a view of the Falls no one else has ever had."

For as it happened, the spot where she hung suspended in the bush was just at that curve in the gorge which commands the Rainbow Falls, and by painfully cricking her neck she could see the marvelous sight of millions of tons of water dashing over the precipice, roaring up again into clouds of vapor, and swerving down the chasm to that terrible place of tumult known as the Boiling Pot. She had recounted this calmly enough to the doctor, who in turn handed it on to Blake. She had even, hanging there, composed another couplet for her Ballad:

Life's a tumble: stick it.
Death's a trickster: trick it.

The strange thing was she didn't mind talking about being *in* the gorge, but only about *before* she got in—an idiosyncrasy that perhaps partly accounted for Anne Haviland's uneasiness as to her mental condition. At any rate she had been sane enough when Anthony Tulloch reached her, for it appeared that as soon as the rope lowered him close enough to hear, she had exclaimed in an exhausted voice:

"Hurrah! I don't think I could have held on much longer!"

Bad Luck, with a taut face, had given to Blake the only account of the rescue ever likely to fall from his lips:

"There she hung, drenched to the bone by the spray, hands and face torn, eyes full of blood, feet actually in the water. Her very flesh was water-logged, and what she must have suffered during the ice-cold mists of the night, God only knows. Yet she could hail me with a whispered 'Hurrah!' "

"By Jove, you're right, Tony—she's a game one! Did she recognize you at once?"

If an iron mask could flinch Anthony Tulloch's face might be said to do so.

"Not at first—in the darkness. When she did, she said something. Something you wouldn't understand, Bill—a matter entirely between ourselves."

Bill put on his imaginary eye-glass and stared relentlessly. He was dying to know what the "something" was.

"I know she thought you a bit of a rotter, for I had to tell her she was making a mistake."

"Thanks, old man"—dryly. "Whether she was

or not is neither here nor there. At any rate I took hold of her and hoisted her up, and that's all there was to it." He was not going to tell even Bill Blake that what she had said on recognizing him was, very icily:

"Oh, it's *you*! I hope you don't think that by this you are atoning for your hateful behavior elsewhere? I'd much rather be left here than forgive you—ever."

She clung to her bush, looking at him with hostile, blood-darkened eyes, and he had answered instantly that he didn't care a tuppenny damn about forgiveness, but had no intention of returning without her; then, roughly ordering her to put her arms round his neck, he proceeded to pull her out of the bush.

Neither was that "all there was to it" by any manner of means. But forever locked up in Anthony Tulloch's breast was the rest of it—the history of that perilous swaying journey upwards, bumping and jerking, wondering whether the rope would hold, one of his arms put out to press back briers and prevent jagged points of rock from dashing their brains out, the other about the strong, slim body of that haunting, taunting woman who had made havoc of his days and nights. Whether she liked it or not, her arms were round his neck, her hair blew across his lips and round his throat, their breaths mingled, his heart beat against hers. It was madness, delirium, enchantment, but he would gladly have gone down into the river below, into the very Pit itself, to have had it continue forever.

He knew in that hour that whether she was married to another man or not, he loved this woman,

and desired no other in his arms, in the secret places of his soul. His heart ached with tenderness for her, lovely, brave, broken; his whole being melted in compassion, and his love would not be silenced.

"Narice," he whispered, and her name was, and would be evermore to him, music adown the years. "Narice . . . I love you . . . You are my life!"

"Anthony." It seemed to be her soul that sighed out against his lips—so warm and enfolding, yet so faint he scarcely heard it. But he felt it on his mouth. They kissed, and knew one exquisite perilous moment of joy, there in mid-air.

Then they were at the top, and being hauled over—back out of wild fantasy into the world of realities! No wonder he had looked like a man dazed or enchanted as he stood there with the lanterns playing on him. He was realizing then that what had just passed was only a dream—a lost dream; that Narice Vanne was a wife, and he himself bound in honor to another woman!

But none of this was related to Blake, none of it would ever be related to anyone, even if his very heart burst with the heavy fatal import of it. However, there were other things for Blake to inquire into. The matter, for instance, of the discovery that the girl was down the gorge at all—what was it Gundaan had found in the dust that put them on the right track?

"Here's what Gundaan found."

From a pocket Bad Luck had produced a piece of folded tissue-paper which, when its folds were uncreased, revealed two tiny gleaming white links of chain—a woman's chain, either of necklet or wristlet, fine and smooth and delicate in workman-

ship, yet so strong that only some very violent strain or tug could possibly have torn it apart from its whole—the strain, for instance, that a falling woman would put on a chain that had caught in something. Merely conjecture, of course, but enough in conjunction with the scuffled earth and broken branch to arrest the attention of both master and man, and keep them rooted to the spot, staring down until at last the white man thought or dreamed he saw the flutter of something there below at the edge of the water.

“I suppose you didn’t ask her about the chain?” inquired Blake, and Tulloch smiled.

“No. What does that matter now? It played its part.”

Such is the limited knowledge that animate beings have of the predestined uses of inanimate things!

Anne Haviland began to look rather strung as the days passed and no sign or token came from the veld of the man she was to marry, but she bore herself with an admirable dignity. As for Morrison, he made no bones about being extremely put out, both in temper and plans.

“I have urgent affairs at home, and ought to have gone long ago,” he told Blake in an irascible manner on being informed for the umpteenth time that there was no news of the recalcitrant bridegroom. “But I can’t leave Anne like this.”

“Good Lord, Morrison! One would think he’d decamped to hear you talk. Can’t a man go on a peaceful, final bachelor bend without all this fuss-potting?”

But to Anne Haviland, looking pale and a little haughty when asked for news, the Irishman spoke more soberly:

"I'm quite sure Tony'll turn up soon. He's a man of moods and tenses as you know—but not one who forgets his obligations."

She answered rather proudly: "You don't suppose I doubt *that*, Major Blake? It is only that I can't help fearing something dreadful has happened."

"Not likely!" Blake laughed at her fears. "Not to old Bad Luck! And after all, there's nearly ten days yet. It will only take him sixty hours to get to Bulawayo and back, with bags of time left over for the wedding-day."

She said a surprising thing then: "But Rupert had counted on coming back with him from Bulawayo by car and carrier and getting in the 'shoot' Tony had promised him on the way."

"Oh, indeed?" said Blake thoughtfully. "I didn't know anything about that!"

"It was a definite plan and Rupert is heartbroken about it. For of course if Tony does not come back shortly there won't be time—unless we postpone the wedding. However . . ." She dropped the subject abruptly. "What I wanted to tell you is that I've seen Narice again, and it was *too* painful. It's all very well for Doctor James to say she's getting better, but she only recognized me by a tremendous effort, and I'm *certain* her brain is affected."

This was bad but not entirely fresh news to Blake, for not only had he heard it from her before, but more than one echo of it on his way down. He

had not yet had time to see James, who, he understood, scoffed at and repudiated anything of the kind, but plainly the story was beginning to be generally believed.

"Poor girl!" he muttered. "I can't believe it somehow. Seems too cruel after all she's gone through!"

"But that's just what has done it," affirmed Anne. "Who could have stood all she went through and come out sane?"

Blake brooded heavily but became suddenly alert at the sight of Elephant James coming along the stoop.

"Hi! Blake, I want you," called out the doctor, but on reaching them his business seemed rather to be with Anne Haviland, for he attacked her brusklly: "What do you mean by forcing your way in on my patient, against my orders and instructions?"

Anne, flushing indignantly, answered with spirit: "I have a right to see my friend and am not going to be kept out by you."

"Oh, aren't you! You didn't do enough mischief on your first visit, I suppose, questioning and ferreting? It looks to me as if you'd *like* her to go potty as you are so diligently reporting her to be."

"How dare you speak to me in this way, Doctor James?" Anne rose in cold fury. "But one has only to look at you to see what a cad you are!" She swept away, leaving the two men staring, Blake in astonishment, James with ribald disdain.

"Cad, eh? You come and judge for yourself, my boy, whether the patient is potty or not. She wants to see you anyhow."

Behold Blake therefore ambling eagerly down passages and through little square courtyards, to the quiet block of rooms given over entirely to the sick girl and her attendants. Nurse Lindsay, a plain but charming Scotchwoman, met them at the door.

"She is looking forward to a talk with you, Major."

He went in on tiptoe, and the moment he saw her and took the frail hand she stretched out to him, he knew that James was right, and the story of her lost mind untrue. Her face was haggard, yes, but as an angel's might be haggard after being up all night, and the violet eyes that always held a smile, even when ghosts peeped from them, looked up with such friendly candor into Blake's that he was reassured at once.

"You are not to let her overtire herself," Nurse Lindsay warned before she left them, and Narice smiled at her retreating back.

"They behave as if I haven't proved that I have a cast-iron constitution," she murmured to Blake. The velvety voice had not come back yet, and she spoke with husky effort.

"Cast-iron, no!" He squinted whimsically, feeling in all his pockets as if for a reward to bestow upon her. "Tempered steel is what you are made of."

"Nonsense." She blinked a tear from her eyelashes, being still too ill to be able to bear praise or pity unemotionally, but after a moment or two she went on cheerfully: "One lucky thing has come out of it anyhow. A rich American has offered two hundred and fifty pounds for my little sketch of the gorge. I've never had such a price before."

"But I believe I could get you more than two hundred and fifty pounds."

"Oh, it's not worth more!"

Blake, who wanted to acquire the masterpiece for himself at double the price, winked mysteriously.

"It *may* be—to someone. Will you let *me* try?"

"Yes, if you like—only"—she closed her eyes, a shudder ran through her, and her voice fell to a rustle—"only, let it be taken far away where I shall never see it again."

He realized the truth then of what James had said: it was not the long misery of hanging in the gorge that haunted and stalked her, but some earlier horror, something connected with the picture that happened before she took that headlong plunge into the abyss. For the first time the suggestion of an attempted suicide entered his head. In the light of her unhappy marriage, would it be so strange if a moment of despair had overtaken her? He looked at her sadly and searchingly as she lay there, so still that he might have believed her asleep but for the large bright tears pushing a way out from under her lashes and stealing sideways down out of sight. A taut, painful sensation made itself felt in the region of that battered leathery object Bill Blake called his heart. He took her hand gently.

"When are they going to be married?" she whispered suddenly, startling him with the knowledge that her thoughts had the same gloomy trend as his own.

"Dunno," he muttered. "It seems to be hung up for the present. Bad Luck is away."

"Keep him away—don't let it happen," she

urged in that tense whispering voice, and after a pause repeated the same warning she had given before: "It isn't fair!"

"To Anthony, you mean?" he queried keenly, but no answer came, though her lips moved as if trying to eject words that stuck in her throat. He spoke low and urgently. "I agree with what you say, Miss Vanne, and I feel a dead certainty you are right; but that's not enough. He'll go through with it unless some cogent reason is produced. Can you give one?"

The entreaty of his voice agitated her visibly; a quiver of pain and misery passed over her features.

"Have you anything against them—anything tangible?" he besought, and at that a stern look entered her face.

She opened her eyes and looked into his strongly, pausing before she spoke, as if for him to get the candor and resolution of her glance as well as the horrid import of her words.

"They pushed me over the gorge."

"What!" burst from Blake's lips.

"Yes," and having made up her mind to speak, she related the story steadily. "I had gone towards the edge of the gorge because Rupert Morrison said something depreciating about my picture in its relation to the beauty of the view. I felt vexed and argumentative and turned facing him just as he put out his hands as if to push me. At once he caught hold of me and began to force me backwards. I couldn't understand at first, but when I saw the cold determination in his eyes, and the watching look on Anne's face, I realized it had all been planned, and I started struggling but he said:

“ ‘You’ve got to go. You know too much.’

“And he pushed me back inch by inch, though I fought, clinging to him strongly. I resolved that if I went over he should come too, but Anne guessed my intention and came to me, tearing at my hands, and kicking my feet until they were over the edge. At the last as I was losing my foothold, she beat my hands with the vacuum flask while holding Rupert back with all her might. Between them they were too strong for me, but I made one last grab and tore something away from her before I went down feet foremost—clinging and cleaving to twigs, stones, anything that stuck out, but everything gave way—nothing stayed me!”

A bright spot glowed in each white cheek, and her eyes dilated as once more she lived through that nightmare descent.

“I crashed over a projection of rock and thought I was done for, but a lower projection below broke my impetus and turned my fall into a slide; but nothing stopped me until I reached that great bush growing right over the stream and dashed sheer into it right up to my ears. It was strong and gave me support, even though my feet were in the river.”

Blake had followed the narrative minutely, seen the whole thing visioned up before him as she described it phrase by phrase, from the beginning of the struggle to the moment she hung there hidden by the bush and projecting cliff from the eyes of those who had thrust her over, and who had no doubt hoped and imagined her swallowed up and lost forever in that deep and secret stream.

“What a murderous, bloody——” He felt so physically sick that when a question thrust itself

sharply into his mind, he could barely articulate it. "What was it—you knew?"

Narice Vanne swallowed, and her mouth took the wry shape of one tasting a vile thing; but at last it had to be told:

"I had discovered that they were lovers."

Her face lay exhausted, white as the pillow on which it rested, her eyes had closed again but she spoke quietly and clearly:

"The housekeeper here was bitten in her room late one night, or rather in the small hours of the morning, by a little snake. It was not a poisonous one, but she didn't know that, of course, and came to me in a frenzy for the snake-bite outfit I carry. As the outfit had been left in Anne's room I rushed there in a hurry, knocked and entered without ceremony and turned up the light. She and Rupert were sleeping calmly side by side. Unfortunately they woke up." She smiled wryly. Blake's face had turned dark with disgust. "No words passed, but I suppose it was then my fate was sealed. You must have seen how determined she was we should not get a word alone that day you returned from the Cape."

"Of course I saw."

"Then on the Monday when you were coming for a talk with me there was no time to be lost. They came down to the gorge with the deliberate intention of—to put it elegantly—doing me in."

"And I met the treacherous assassinating brutes coming away red-handed!" exclaimed Blake. "Lord, what a pair! No wonder she's trying to make out your mind is gone as well as your memory!"

"My mind is as clear as hers, and my memory too of everything that occurred from the time I refused the tea they had brought, and which I think was probably doped, to the moment they got up and sauntered away, and Rupert called out: 'Narice, come and see! You've missed the magic of the thing. Your picture is only an oleograph!' But when Anne came in, looking at me with hate and terror in her eyes while she held my hand with tender sympathy, I thought it prudent to dissemble. I felt very much at their mercy, lying here. Even though the nurses promised never to leave me waking or sleeping, they didn't know what danger I was in, and I couldn't tell them, so the only thing—as I wished to live to fight another day"—she made a wan grimace—"was to sacrifice my memory!"

Blake said slowly, though his mind had been working fast enough: "You will need your memory and everything else if we are to defeat their finished villainy. I am pretty certain now that other dark things I've heard are true. They are experts at this game."

"Even experts are defeated sometimes. Have you ever heard the saying—'The dice of God are always loaded'?"

"No!" He was arrested by the phrase.

"Well—it's true, though crooks and murderers always forget it. When they throw the dice for the lives and honor of others, God takes a hand in the game and they never win, though sometimes—to serve the eternal justice which we don't understand—they *seem* to."

Her voice had grown very frail, and Blake realized suddenly how done in she was.

"My poor child, what you've gone through!"

"That doesn't matter, as long as it is of use—as long as it prevents them from victimizing Ant—your friend Sir Anthony. And here is a thing that will help." She slid one hand under the pillow and brought out something she guarded there. "Here is what I tore from Anne's neck as I went over the side of the gorge."

She opened her hand and showed him what lay there—the little flat diamond monkey with ruby eyes that Anne Haviland used to wear always on her bosom. To each of the outstretched monkey claws there still adhered a few platinum links of chain, wrenched out of shape but obviously matching those tiny links Gundaan had found, and that Anthony Tulloch carried in his pocket.

"Proof tangible, unassailable!" almost shouted Blake. "Never part with it!"

"I know. That's why I hung on to it as long as I could, even while I was grasping at bushes and stones for a hold, but it slipped away as it was bound to, and I thought it had gone forever! However, it had only fallen into the big gaping pocket of my painting smock, and Nurse found it there and gave it to me. She doesn't know of course that it is not mine."

"Let me have it to show Tony," said Blake eagerly. "He already has some of the links—found by him at the edge of the gorge."

With quiet confidence she handed it over and he stowed it carefully away.

"The great thing is for you to get well," he said gently. "And don't worry any more. We'll fix 'em."

With that he went straight from her bedside to the post-office and sent off the following telegram to his brother-in-law:

With regard Calcutta lawsuit and tragedy want you to cable immediately for full details by return cable. Matter too vitally urgent to await mail.

Having sent off this wire as a first move, the next was to find Elephant James and encompass with him a long and highly informative *indaba*, after which there was a reasonable certitude of Narice Vanne's security against further "accidents." By evening he was speeding once more towards Kafue, being determined that no one else should get ahead of him in seeing Bad Luck on the latter's return from his shoot.

What he had not reckoned on, however, was one of those little countermoves that Fate makes when she thinks human beings are too cocksure, and human plans for "poetic justice" running too smoothly. So while he sat complacent if not patient at Portulloch, the man he awaited was in fact heading in an opposite direction and getting farther away from him daily.

For when Anthony Tulloch took his groaning spirit into the wilderness, he had not left behind him the burden of his obligations, including that one fixed for November the second. He had also quite a lively recollection that certain documents in Bulawayo awaited his signature. Therefore from the first the direction of his trek had been southerly, with Bulawayo as its objective. Long since his party had crossed the river by canoe,

plunged into that thickly bushed district known as the Sebungu, worked thence west to Wankie, the great coal center, and at last, close to this ugliest, grimmest station in Rhodesia, he called a halt, and having struck a camp, left it in charge of Gundaan while he took train for Bulawayo.

The promise of a "shoot" to Morrison had not been forgotten either, and as that gentleman professed a hankering for lion, and there was plenty of lion on the march just made, Tulloch's idea was to get the legal business over first, collect Morrison for a jump-off again from Wankie, and make the return journey to Livingstone by veld, timing it to end on November the first. A license had already been secured for the marriage, but to any social side of that function he never gave a single thought, his one idea being to keep distance between himself and verbal intercourse with the world as long as possible.

What was going to happen after marriage did not bear thinking of, either. Nothing bore thinking of, except one person—and that was living torment. To remember Narice Vanne and her kiss on his mouth was to be a man lost in the bush and dying of thirst. Yet there seemed no moment in the day in which he did not remember, and the nights gave him no peace.

"I shall remember while the light lasts yet, and in the darkness I shall not forget!"

He did not know where those words came from, whether they were prose or poetry, but only that they applied to the burning memory of Narice Vanne, branded on his desolate soul. To ask for release from his contract to marry Anne Haviland

was an idea that sometimes entered his mind, but only to be dismissed instantly. He was so constituted that he could not break faith with a woman. The break, if there was to be one, must come from her side.

Had it occurred to him that money meant anything to her, he would gladly have handed over every penny he owned in return for freedom. But no such view of his future wife occurred to him. He thought of her as sweet and beautiful and good, and he thought of her with pity because he had nothing to give in return for the lovely gifts she offered.

As might be said of a good many other Rhodesians, most of Bad Luck's correspondence was done by wire, and his first act in Bulawayo was to telegraph Morrison outlining the plan for the shoot, and asking him, if this suited, to be at Wankie in two days' time. To Anne he sent a long wire full of apologies, a similar outline of plan, and a request that she would consent to it. Blake came next—he never left Blake long without a line on his whereabouts and intentions. The only person he did not wire to was the one who filled his heart, but towards whom invisible, silent messages were passing with every beat of his pulse.

As to the marriage settlements, he had seen Falkland, his lawyer, at the Bulawayo Club, and been told that everything was in order for signing. Rupert Morrison, it seemed, was a most efficient person when it came to instructions for the endowment of a bride, and Tulloch had practically given him *carte blanche* to arrange things with Falkland. But the latter would not be satisfied except to go

through documents carefully with his client, and an appointment was made.

Arrived at Falkland's office he had it pointed out to him at great length that it was no act of a sane and level-headed Scotchman to hand over all possessions lock, stock and barrel to a lady who was not yet his wife.

"Only in case of my death—and"—Anthony Tulloch smiled grimly—"I seem to be in fair trim at present."

"I know all about that," retorted Falkland, "but I never like these premature arrangements. Time enough to endow a woman when she *is* your wife, and all settlements ought to be provisional on the marriage." Then he looked at the other narrowly. "I sometimes think you forget your nickname, Tony. Death or anything else might happen to a man dubbed Bad Luck."

But Anthony Tulloch only laughed, thinking to himself that death under some circumstances, swift and unsought, might not be such bad luck after all.

"Oh, all right, then," said Falkland, gruff but resigned. "Ask for trouble if you like. It's not *my* funeral! When will Miss Haviland be here to sign?"

"*What!*" exclaimed Anthony Tulloch, glaring.

"Well, of course you know the deeds have to be signed by her at the same time as you?"

His client, at first stupefied with surprise, became violently annoyed. "But of course I knew nothing of the sort!" he shouted. "It will mean a loss of two or three days, an impossibility of leaving here tonight, and no time for the shoot I'd arranged!"

"Can't help that," replied Falkland stolidly. "Deeds and settlements are serious things, and have serious procedure attached to them!"

"Curse!" said Anthony Tulloch, and proceeded to do so volubly. He hated plans to "gang agley" through negligence or oversight. This delay of waiting for Anne would entail such loss of time that either Morrison must go without his shoot, or the wedding date be postponed. He realized that it was his own fault.

It took time, patience and tact to compose an entirely fresh batch of telegrams, but to his surprise and relief after a five-hours' wait, there came an answer from Anne that she was quite willing to postpone the wedding for another two weeks in order that he and Rupert should not have to rush their shooting trip; meanwhile she was packing up and would be in Bulawayo in three days' time.

There came also a brief reply from Blake at Portulloch: "Don't do anything till I see you. Bill." As this facetious phrase was one which Blake was wont to use in bidding any friend good-by, there seemed no reason for taking it very seriously, but in that it appeared to imply a probability of Blake's joining him at Bulawayo, the news was pleasing. Since he must have the company of Rupert Morrison, the burden of it would be considerably relieved by the presence of a tried friend, and Blake was a good man on the veld.

In three days' time the whole quartet met together at the Bulawayo station, though by a curious circumstance Anne Haviland and her cousin had no idea of Blake's presence on the train until he joined them on the platform. This, Blake explained, was

due to his being confined to his *coupé* with a "go of fever." Illness had not dimmed his Rhodesian complexion (nor as the train attendants might have testified, interfered with his excellent appetite), but it seemed to have somewhat tempered his geniality. Not that Bad Luck noticed anything—a grip of the hand and the exchange of a cataleptic stare was the only measure of geniality required between those two—but the others were aware of some subtle change in Blake's manner, and perhaps they considered the fever story unconvincing.

At any rate, at the Grand Hotel, to which all adjourned, Anne remarked significantly upon it to Morrison. They were being shown to their rooms, the others having remained in the lounge; and as she took her jewel-case from his hands at her bedroom door, she murmured rapidly:

"Be careful. Blake has found out something."

"I know, confound him!" was the terse reply. "Hurry up and come down. We mustn't leave them together while those deeds are still unsigned."

Then he hurriedly returned to where Blake and Bad Luck were seated waiting at a small table. Anne had promised to come back and take tea with them as soon as she had got rid of a little travel dust. A number of other parties were scattered at similar tables, and people perpetually came and went in an atmosphere of chatter and laughter. The lounge of the Grand Hotel, Bulawayo, is one of the great meeting-places of South Africa and this was eleven o'clock in the morning—always an hour for friendly gatherings.

What had passed between the two men Morrison could not guess, but evidently nothing very vital so

far, for Anthony Tulloch sitting with his chair tilted slightly on its back legs seemed carelessly at ease, his gray-green gaze straying absently about the room. As a matter of fact he was musing on Tim Trafford, whose image Blake had just conjured up by a quiet statement:

"I've had a long wire from Tim on a most urgent and important matter, Tony, and as soon as you get away from the others I want you to go into it with me."

"Right!" Tony assented readily. He was fond of Tim Trafford and always ready to interest himself in the troubles of a friend. He now addressed himself civilly enough to Morrison: "Shall I order you something to drink? Bill and I have already breasted the bar."

"No, thanks, I'll wait for Anne and the tea."

It was not long before she reappeared at the head of a stairway leading directly into the lounge, and as Anthony Tulloch rose and went to meet her, the eyes of every beholder were upon them. They certainly made a remarkable pair. She, gold-haired, rose-tinted, radiant, against the great height, red-brownness, and tragic handsomeness of him, leaning on his stick and dragging his leg a little. He piloted her across the room to where Blake, red,, squinting through an imaginary monocle, and Morrison, sleek, fair and bored-looking, awaited them.

An interesting group and a picturesque pair, as a good many people thought, and at least one man observed aloud, gazing at them with the critical eye of the artist: a fine-looking man with a head like Rodin and a lion-like mane of gray hair flung back from his brow. He was a traveler arrived only that

morning by the mail-train, and the men with him were fellow travelers, but they were Bulawayans as well, and at his words, one of them—Tottie Allen—jumped up with an exclamation:

“By Jove! It’s Anthony Tulloch himself—the very man you must meet, sir.”

The Rodin man jumped up too at those words, as if galvanized, and rushed across the room, arriving even ahead of his escort. Surprise writ itself large upon Anne Haviland and the faces of the men around her. But stranger things were to come. The lion-maned one had snatched Bad Luck’s hand, was wringing it warmly, was stammering:

“God bless you, my dear fellow! Thank you—and God bless you!”

“But—what the—why?” Anthony Tulloch, astonished and puzzled, struggled hard to get his hand away, unable to make head or tail of the situation, and inclined to be indignant until Tottie Allen, giggling with glee, explained:

“Don’t be alarmed—this is Mr. Vanne whose daughter you saved from the Batoka Gorge. He’s only trying to thank you.”

“Yes—only *trying*,” repeated Mr. Vanne soberly. He had stopped wringing Tulloch’s hand and now stood staring intently into those gray-green eyes, his own shining with tears. “Only trying. I shall never be able to find words really to express my gratitude to you, Sir Anthony, for saving the life of my beloved and only child.”

It was as surprising to the others as embarrassing to Bad Luck. Blake’s eyes were popping out of his head, and Morrison and Anne sat speechless, but the latter was swift to recover and graciously introduce

herself as Narice's friend and collaborator. That seemed remarkable too—that she who had known Narice for "so many years" had yet never met Narice's father! However, Rafe Vanne, A. R. A., for it soon transpired that he was that famous painter of name familiar and revered in the world of art, was of course aware of Miss Haviland's literary association with his daughter, and eagerly inquired of her the latest news of Narice. Doctor James, he explained, had kept him well supplied with telegraphic bulletins, but this was his first meeting with anyone who had actually seen her since the accident. Anne's face at once became overcast, her mouth gravely sad, but before she could speak Blake broke in loudly:

"I was the last person of this party to see your daughter, Mr. Vanne, and am therefore in a position to tell you that she is coming along splendidly. Doctor James is perfectly satisfied with her in every way, and nothing you hear to the contrary need give you a moment's uneasiness."

His tone was so significant as to make them all stare; a tenseness came into the atmosphere, and Anne's eyes regarded his with an icy glitter.

"Yes—but is everyone satisfied with Doctor James?" queried Morrison sharply.

Blake's *riposte* was instant. "He's acknowledged to be the finest medical expert in this country, though a stranger like you can scarcely appreciate that fact."

Rafe Vanne, puzzled and worried by this unexpected and acrimonious controversy, turned from one to the other, then said courteously to Blake: "At any rate I am most grateful for your news, and

by this time tomorrow I hope to judge my daughter's condition for myself. Meanwhile——"

"Meanwhile, let nothing you hear worry you," repeated Blake authoritatively. "I make a special point of this because for reasons of their own some people"—he looked pointedly at Anne and Morrison—"have been trying to make out that the shock of her accident has affected Miss Vanne's reason."

"This is the first I've heard of it," broke in Anthony Tulloch fiercely. "Her reason was sound as a bell when she came up from the gorge."

"And is now," asserted Blake. "The thing is a deliberate lie. James is furious about it."

"But why should anyone . . ." Narice's father took out a handkerchief and passed it over his forehead.

Anne spoke to him sorrowfully: "Alas, you will find there is much to bear, Mr. Vanne." Then with a wounded air of appeal, she turned to her fiancé: "No doubt your friend Major Blake *means* well, Tony, but surely his manner is rather unnecessarily offensive and personal?"

"So much so," interjected Rupert Morrison belligerently, "that if *you* don't demand an explanation, Sir Anthony, *I* shall."

This was carrying the war into the enemy's camp with diligence and possibly with success, for Bad Luck wore a dark and scowling aspect as he looked at his friend.

"I don't understand what all this is about," he began, but Blake was attacking Rupert Morrison with an answering truculence:

"You shall have all the explanations you like—and a whole lot more you don't like."

Anne rose, pale and strained.

"Please take me away, Tony," she pleaded in a faint voice, and there was nothing for him but to do so, Morrison sauntering moodily after them. They went up-stairs, possibly to the wide balcony that ran all round the building and Blake was left with Rafe Vanne, A. R. A.; it was not what he had planned, but for the moment it served.

"Mr. Vanne," he said hurriedly, "let me assure you once more that there's nothing to worry about. Your daughter is in good hands and recovering as fast as she can. But she's been in great danger through her association with Miss Haviland, and I'd be glad if you wouldn't mind telling me how long they've been acquainted."

"They met only on the voyage out, some three months ago, were interested in each other's work, and it was decided that Narice should try to reduce some of her big pictures for use as illustrations to the Rhodesian book."

"Do you tell me that Miss Haviland has not known your daughter for years and been acquainted with her husband and unhappy married life?"

"What are you talking about, my dear sir?" Rafe Vanne wore a look of mingled amazement and impatience. "My daughter has never married—and I'd like to see the man who makes her unhappy when she does."

"Are you certain about this?" Blake persisted, but so earnestly, and with such entreaty, that the older man realized there was something here of greater import than mere curiosity, and could not be angry though he was extremely ruffled.

"Of course I am certain, my dear fellow! Narice

and I, since she was left to me a little motherless child, have been more than ordinary father and daughter, and there is no important fact of her life I do not know about—above all, marriage! Good gracious, this is really an extraordinary country!" he burst out laughing.

Blake's wrought-up face looked more like crying, but he only seized the other's hand and gripped it hard.

"Thank God for what you have said," he mumbled huskily. "I can't tell you more now, but perhaps it will be explained soon. Possibly Tulloch and I may be returning with you to the Falls. What time does your train go?"

"In about two hours from now."

"Well, I'll see if I can find him at once."

Blake took the stairs two at a time, but his quarry was not on the balcony nor yet in the public drawing-room. The only other reasonable place to seek him was in a private sitting-room that the partners sometimes engaged when staying at the Grand.

Sure enough, there they were, Bad Luck as cheerful as a man about to be executed, leaning on his stick with an elbow on the mantelpiece; Anne wearing traces of a few becoming tears and drooping beside him in a chair; while on a sofa opposite, lounging with nonchalant grace, a cigaret between his teeth, was Rupert Morrison. A writing-table with pens, ink and blotter occupied an important position, and a sense of constraint brooded over all. Bad Luck looked at his friend with anything but joyous welcome.

"We're waiting for Falkland, and he's considerably late," he said in a surly tone.

"Just as well, perhaps, Tony, for the matter I mentioned down-stairs ought to take precedence of——"

Morrison jumped up like a man stung. "Nothing can take precedence of the business between Sir Anthony and my cousin. She's tired out and I must insist——"

The entry of Falkland put a temporary stop to the discussion, but when the lawyer had been introduced and was seated at the table opening his folio, Blake stepped over to him and held out a fat red telegraph envelop.

"Just run your eye over that please, Falk, before you go any further."

Morrison, in furious exasperation, turned to Anthony Tulloch. "Haven't you the sand to keep this fellow out of what doesn't concern him? He's neither kith nor kin and his presence here is not only obnoxious——"

But Bad Luck made the gesture of brushing away a fly—and a tsetse fly at that.

"We'll hear what it's all about, Falkland, please," he said with quiet command to the lawyer who had been running rapidly through flimsy sheet after sheet.

Anne suddenly closed her eyes and flopped in her chair as if in a fainting condition, and this was a signal for Morrison to make one more effort.

"I protest against this monstrous interruption."

"Kindly shut up and sit down," said Falkland rudely, and began to read aloud:

"Copy of cable received from John Quentin R. M. of Goonah Central India and sometime of the Calcutta

Courts (Stop) The tragedy and lawsuit referred to in which Miss Anne Haviland and Rupert Morrison were involved took place in this country in 1914 (Stop) A young Englishman named Wilfred Rokeby becoming engaged to Anne Haviland settled upon her by deed his life policy of £ 20,000 (Stop) A week later while on a tiger shoot in the Terai he was shot dead (Stop) The *shikarees* gave evidence that it was Morrison's gun that killed him but impossible to prove shot was not accidental (Stop) Insurance company contested Miss Haviland's claim but she won case and received money . . ."

Falkland paused and took stock of his audience. Anne, appreciably paler, still lay back with closed eyes, but Bad Luck did not look at her. He was stonily regarding Morrison. That gentleman produced a bleak smile.

"Well?" he inquired coolly. "What of it? The case as you hear was fought out, and Anne won. What about it?"

For a moment, taken aback by this superb effrontery, all were silent. Then Falkland, the tip of a legal finger to the tip of his legal nose, said reflectively:

"Don't you think Sir Anthony Tulloch ought to have been told something about this nasty affair before making a similar endowment of his possessions and then going on a shoot with you, as planned?"

"What do you mean?" Morrison came towards him menacingly.

"Gently, gently." Falkland wagged a legal finger admonishingly.

It was now Anne's turn to spring up and turn,

but it was to Anthony Tulloch she turned, full of proud indignation. "Tony, this is shameful! If you wish to be released from our engagement you have only to say so, but please don't allow my cousin to be insulted in this odious way."

"Your husband, you mean," said Falkland quietly.

Then indeed fell a deadly stillness. Both man and woman seemed veritably struck dumb. As for Anthony Tulloch, whatever he had begun to expect or fear it had not been this. In the silence that prevailed Falkland read the rest of the telegram.

"Insurance Company about to reopen case charging Morrison and Haviland with fraudulent conspiracy further details having come to light including fact that within three weeks of obtaining judgment and money Anne Haviland was married to Rupert Morrison."

Anne sank down as if struck. Rupert Morrison's complexion had taken a greenish tinge, but without a tremor he lighted a cigaret and looked with incredible impudence at Anthony Tulloch.

"If you choose to believe everything written on a telegraph form you are at liberty to do so. It's all a mass of lies, but it has served at any rate to show up what a rotten lot you fellows are—and I'm very glad Anne need have nothing more to do with any of you. Come on, Anne!"

But Blake, blocking their way to the door, had one more thing to say: "I suppose you'll say it's a lie too that you and your wife attempted to murder Miss Vanne by pushing her over the gorge?"

There was not much kick left in Anne, but she managed to work up a cry of well-assumed horror at this; the man, on the contrary, blenched for the first time, and Anthony Tulloch's stony impassivity was broken at last.

"By the Lord!" he exclaimed. "If that is true I'll spend my last bean in getting you both convicted."

"Of course it's true," said Blake. "She told me with her own lips. That's why they've been trying to make out she's mad." He addressed himself to Anne. "What about your diamond monkey that she tore from your neck as you helped push her over the side?" He advanced upon her, holding out the little jewel, and she stared at it like a woman hypnotized. "Tony found some of the links at the spot where the struggle took place. No doubt you have the rest?" He paused, and then said with a strange impressiveness: "The dice of God!"

"You are mad—*she* is mad—everyone is mad!" screamed Anne, and striking at his hand fell to the floor in a frenzied fit of hysteria which if not real was at least extremely well acted. They left her to her husband's tender ministrations.

Outside the door Blake turned to the man he cared for more than a brother, and gave one further proof of his affection:

"What's more, Tony, she lied about Miss Vanne's marriage, and I passed on the lie to you. If it means anything to you to know it, Miss Vanne is not married and never has been."

They traveled back to Victoria Falls in the same train with Narice Vanne's father, and the beginning

of a firm friendship was established between the three men. The artist, a courtly, cultivated man of the world, yet possessed that gentleness and simplicity of character so often found in men of genius.

For that reason he found the ugly account of the Morrison treachery incredible and almost beyond discussion. To explain his own mysterious behavior in the lounge, Blake had to go fully into the story, but the old man having heard, brushed it aside with a fine gesture of disdain. It was enough for him that his daughter had escaped whole from these machinations and was now safe and sound.

To Anthony Tulloch he took with a whole-hearted pleasure, refreshing to witness and not altogether strange, for Bad Luck was no longer the dark, moody man of many yesterdays, but had unaccountably turned into a gay, light-hearted boy. He would even talk for the first time, though shyly, about the rescue from the gorge—since the old man required it. There was nothing he could refuse to the father of Narice Vanne! Only when it was a question of letting the miscreants escape did he turn dour again, repeating with violence that they should be pursued and punished if it cost him his last penny. This perhaps naturally astonished Mr. Vanne, considering the circumstance of the recent engagement to Anne Haviland.

He looked searchingly at the speaker but only said, mildly:

“That would be a family matter, Sir Anthony. If they are to be prosecuted for attempting to murder my daughter, I wouldn’t dream of letting you be bothered with the disagreeable business.”

Blake at least got a lot of fun out of Bad Luck’s

discomfiture at this unconscious reproof, and proceeded to wriggle and wink with a ghoulisn glee not lost upon his partner.

"I know very well how good you have been, and how much Narice thinks of you. Long before you saved her life she wrote me an attractive description of you, and of your kind, successful hunt for the ring I gave her when she was eighteen," said Rafe Vanne.

He little guessed how those words dismissed the last tinge of Anthony Tulloch's torment even while inflicting one more pang on his conscience. It was pleasant, however, to be invited with such ardor by the owner of Portulloch to visit that famous ranch and stay as long as possible, and Mr. Vanne accepted gratefully but provisionally upon the state of his daughter's convalescence.

"I suppose you are both going straight there now?" he inquired, for by that time they were nearing their destination, and the boom of the Falls could be plainly heard.

"Only Blake," said Bad Luck with vindictiveness. "I have something to do here, but urgent matters need Blake's attention at the farm."

He desired no *attaché* to his embassy at the Victoria Falls Hotel. And no witnesses either, as he made tactfully clear to Rafe Vanne, when on the day after arrival the father brought from his daughter a message in answer to a note from Bad Luck to say she was in her sitting-room and would see him.

He went in a spirit humble enough, for he knew that he was in the wrong from the first, and that for his outrageous act committed against her sweetness in this very room his rightful portion was to bite the

dust at her feet; and he meant to do it too, without justifying himself one little bit in the process, even though a nightingale within him sang a wild sweet song of triumph. But when he saw her leaning there against her cushions, proud and defiant as a slender boy broken in the wars, yet with the soft hair ringed about her delicately hollowed face, the misty, tender violets of her eyes, the curving allure-ment of her lips, so essentially a woman, *the* woman desired, the vase that held both crystal water and heady wine—he found no words to say. Nor was there need of words. Their hearts sprang together as they had sprung on that night in the Rain Forest, their lips met with the exquisite perilous sweetness they had known in the gorge. He could only, brokenly, repeat himself:

“Narice, you are my life.”

And she murmur back: “I love you, Anthony. There has never been any man for me but you!”

While in her heart she added one last couplet to her ballad:

Life's a red rose: give it.
Life's a poem: live it!

ANYONE WHO HAS A STOMACHACHE
SHOULD BE ARRESTED

By Gerald Stanley Lee

THERE are several ways people can take when a man is not well.

One way, when a man has a stomachache, is to have him arrested.

Another way is to laugh at him and get him to see that he is a ridiculous object. If ten thousand men in New York would agree tomorrow for one year publicly to make fun of fat men in the streets, so that only people in taxis could afford to be fat in New York, everybody knows what would happen.

Another way is to sympathize with him in being a ridiculous object, coddle him, let him suppose his being so absurd is not his own fault, and put it off on God.

Another way is to rouse up his intolerance, start him up into being ashamed of himself.

My own choice is the first—simply have him arrested.

It sounds extreme but when one comes, as one does in Samuel Butler's "Erewhon," on a whole society regarding a man's being sick an act of aggression, it is astonishing how sensible it seems.

The habit of making one's stomach ache by overwork is as catching as any other habit. It runs in families, just as laziness runs in families. And certainly if a man cannot hold up or arrest himself there ought to be someone by to help.

People can already be arrested for spitting and very soon people with colds will be sent home to breathe, or be put in jail for doing public breathing.

People already feel there ought to be a law enacted to have a man arrested in a street-car for spraying a cold at them.

And a stomachache, though it is not showy, is quite as much an act of aggression on civilization as a cold. It is not only catching to a little temporary audience of fifteen hundred people a man has around him in a theater, but it is catching to his fifteen hundred thousand children.

When a man takes the liberty of being a father, who is an addict of a stomachache, a chronic or confirmed colic—he is committing an act of aggression on a nation. He transmits a complex of habits—a tendency in people toward overriding the body.

It is an insult to the next thousand years to be chronically not well. An unhealthy ancestor dead four thousand years keeps right on being a public nuisance and a national menace.

Society is getting to be as intolerant toward a man who compels his stomach to ache, as his stomach is.

The man who is loose about his own health, or other people's health, finds he is as intolerable to people as the man who is loose about his own money or about other people's money.

One day when I was taking a vacation in a village up in the mountains, I looked out of a window up the crooked little street and saw a 250-pound Justice of the Supreme Court of the State of ——— walking placidly up the road eating chocolates out of a bag. Suddenly, when his wife appeared coming out of a store two doors away, he

whisked the bag into his pocket. He had nearly died six months before from having to tote around permanently 130 pounds of sugar he never really used, and had had to make a solemn promise not to eat except in his wife's presence.

Everybody is found looking on ill health, as a matter of course, in the way they already look upon a bad cough in an audience. People look around and say, "Why did you come?" and the time is not far off when ushers will step up to people coughing in a theater and say:

"This audience and the players are asking you to go home. These seats you have paid for will be reserved for you if you want them two weeks later."

When it is considered by everyone unnecessary and shiftless to be ill, it will be bad manners to ask after a man's health.

The weak, kind person who meets a really well, chronically robust man in the morning by saying "How's your health?" will get his head taken off for it.

The whole clinging idea, even now, among women—the idea of pitying weakness and deferring to it—has changed. With the modern girl, a young man who offers to help her over a fence, or around a puddle, takes a chance. She waves him aside. She wants to be treated politely—treated as if she knew how to handle herself as well as he does.

The present spectacle of civilization, of thousands of contented men bent with work, battered with play, pampering themselves in parlors, rolling around in limousines with their insides burning up, is not much longer going to be before our eyes. With our modern knowledge people are getting too

unsentimental. Millions of us are seeing the thing as it is and are acting on it. The taboos, styles and customs of society on every hand are turning the other way. A stampede for wholesomeness sweeps us along. Millions of young men and women today who might have written this article will sign it when they read it.

Now the most powerful of all lures in making health catching is the lure of money.

Samuel Vauclain, the President of the Baldwin Locomotive Works, whose time at the office is rated as being worth \$500 a day, has his office time contracted for with his doctor. He pays his doctor a salary of so much a year for keeping him well and gets a rebate every day he is sick.

Health is being treated in big business in America reverently, like money. *Health is money.*

Anyone can see what is happening. When a natural and reasonable arrangement like Mr. Vauclain's becomes general among large employers it logically leads to the large employer's wanting some similar arrangement for his executives. He wants the men he has to work with as fit as he is.

This arrangement for executives logically leads, as anyone can see, to some similar arrangement for all labor about the place. It is just a matter of working out details, and working men all over the country—union men and non-union men—will soon be taking their doctors as seriously as Vauclain does, regarding doctors as belonging to a really great and serious profession and letting their doctors, as Vauclain does, finish their job.

If working men don't do this, firms will. Overtake will make them. No big company very much

longer is going to be caught spending three years in educating a sick, unguaranteed man—a man they will lose or as good as lose in three or four years—when with the same time and the same money, they can educate for the same job a man they could keep forty or fifty years.

In those first experimenting months when the Ford factory, in its huge, hopeful, innocent-looking way, was trying to make any man whether or no worth five dollars a day, there were all manner of meddling things—even spiritual things—the Ford factory sprawled out into. But what it all finally simmered down to was health. The factory found it couldn't stick it out for a man's theology, but a man's biology—a central fact in a man—the factory did have to admit made a difference to it.

However the technique may be worked out, every man who knows anything about business or human nature knows that, next to his job, it is the personal habit a man has from day to day that makes or un-makes his value to the factory. The business concerns which first find a decent way to do something about setting up in each man they employ the daily habits that keep him fit, are going to have on their rolls everywhere the pick of the labor and the pick of the executives of the country.

In the Dennison Manufacturing Company the health of the executives is made as definite a part of a man's contract as his salary. A man's health comes in as the first part of his job.

When Mr. Vauclain's idea is carried through to its logical conclusion people will expect to pay a rebate for being bilious on company time. It is as unpractical in a business way for a saleswoman to

have a headache—to take thirty percent from her power to please customers and make sales all day and draw pay for it—as it is to leave the counter at three o'clock and go and sit down at the movies and draw pay for it.

The general recognition of a new standard of health as part of common honesty in business is taking shape all around us, and the arrangement Mr. Vauclain has made with his doctor is really a typical, standard, rational arrangement that all of us—employees and employers—would make if we could.

I believe there should be for *each* man his own ideal—his own private appetite for health, which makes itself catching to others.

There should be a public or cooperative conception of health—a standard of just how miserable a man should be willing to be without feeling everybody ashamed of him.

There should be a personal technique for keeping one's standard which one knows and is ashamed not to use. Each man of us can always be sure just what he has failed to do, and what he has to do not to be ill again.

There is one other essential element. If we are going to follow a general rule of sick-bed shame and of applying laughter and tears to illness, we must learn to laugh and cry straight, and allow for exceptions—people too old or settled to change their ideals or health styles—people who have met with accidents—people who from chronic discouragement have become immune to health, extreme cases of heredity and of exposure; and last of all there are the people on sick-beds, that God knows and that some of us know, who touch the world with

a high seriousness and a glad heroism when we stand beside them. How often have I come away from their bedsides with a light heart!

In their name, in the name of their courage we say it: "*We are ashamed to be ill!*"

RED PANTS

By Capt. John W. Thomason, Jr.

THE flank company of the First Battalion, 5th Marines, came, at length and after various adventures, to rest in the Vierzy Ravine. A few kilometers forward the battle of Soissons roared into the afternoon of its second day, the 19th of July, 1918. The flank company, now something under a hundred men, was very tired and extremely cross, and hungry beyond anything in its wide experience.

"Th' Lootenant passed the word we'd wait here till the galleys get up——"

"Yeh—seen a battalion runner; he said they was somewhere around, but lost as usual. An' here we sit——"

"Somethin' to be said for trenches—you don't have to go so many places—my dogs is wore off clean to my knees. Open warfare——"

"Some of you animals are sure hard to please," said Sergeant Cannon sadly. "Down in those swell Verdun trenches, you guys was all moanin' because you couldn't get Heinie in the open, like—now you've got him in the open, an' you growl just the same."

The mission of the flank company in the attack that started the morning before had been combat liaison—that is, to keep contact between the flank of the Second American Division—regular army and United States Marines—and the First Moroccan Division of Mangin's French X. Army on their left.

The detail had not been exacting, except that it had involved a lot of distance. The Senegalese and North Africans of the Moroccan Division operated to the entire approval of the critical 5th Marines. Together, on the track of a hurricane of artillery that shook the world and made the dim Villers-Cotterêts forest a hell of flashing fires and smoky thunder, they had poured over the Boche forward positions, long French bayonets and broad American bayonets flickering together in the red light of the shells.

Drawn a little apart some places, and all furiously mingled elsewhere, they had shot and stabbed across the echeloned machine guns and the wire and the rifles that held the woods. Bursting through into open wheat and sunlight, they suffered alike from the cross-fire that came out of the Vierzy Ravine, and they had followed—Senegalese calling on Allah and Marines swearing and yelling—the tanks that opened the way into that place. They had swept on to the final objective beyond Vierzy, and established their lines, and come out when their job was accomplished. Now they lay on the fringes of the fight, still in contact, sodden with weariness, waiting for what the gods might send.

Up forward, the war went on, with a great orchestration of sound; monotone of machine guns, hysterical crackle of rifles, drumming of field batteries, and the roar and rumble of heavy shells. Other troops of the Second Division, French Colonials of Mangin's assault army, and the First American Division, all battered into the collapsing face of the Marne Salient. From Soissons south the fighting was bitter; Boche reserves were flowing

in from the Rheims country, and a desperate German general held up his crumbling flank with one hand, while with the other he plucked troops and guns, now threatened with disaster, from Château Thierry and the Marne valley to the south and west.

But the troops resting around the Vierzy Ravine were not concerned with these things. This ravine had been, for some hours on the 18th of July, an interesting place. There were Boche support troops in it, and broken units from the woods had reformed there and fought. It angled from the wheat in front of the woods across to the right, towards the town. The dead were very thick as you approached it; they lay together in German *Feld-grau*, American khaki, and the mustard-colored uniforms of the Moroccan Division. Within, in the ravine, the shells had wrought terribly; there was wreckage of horse batteries and motor transportation caught on the move, and pitiful wreckage of men, flung grotesquely here and yonder. Then tanks and rifles and bayonets had come into it; the old Boche died very hard in the Vierzy Ravine. Later, wounded men had crawled or been carried to its shelter. There had been a German dressing station under a cliff where a cave was, and a red-headed surgeon of the 9th Infantry had taken it over complete, with German doctors, and tended acres of casualties for thirty hours or so.

The afternoon of the 18th, Boche planes had bombed it furiously, and Boche heavies plastered it from end to end with 220 millimeter shells. Then the battle rolled on, and the Boche became too gravely concerned about his immediate front to give attention to the approaches. Now the Vierzy

Ravine was a sort of backwash of the war, into which drew a melancholy drift of wounded men, gassed men, prisoners, and exhausted troops who had gone to the far edge of human endurance.

The flank company of the 5th settled into holes and regarded things morosely. They had come a long way, very arduously. They had fought a battle, and done odd jobs, bringing in wounded and digging after that, and they had not eaten. They had last seen their galleys and had a formal meal the forenoon of July 16th; the messmen had slammed out beans, packed up and departed by another road—at least, no man saw them. Since then, the company, its iron rations expended, had cadged off French outfits and searched the knapsacks of Boche casualties. These yielded an infrequent sausage and occasional little wooden cylinders of honey, and much black *Kriegsbrot*—sustained life but nothing else. The lieutenant commanding the company was hungrier than anybody; he rubbed his lean stomach and listened to his men curse the war.

Some of them slept. An unshaven marine with a dirty face and a bright dent in his helmet scratched himself and said:

“Damn all mess sergeants! Them Senegalese coons over there, they’ve et twicet today. Smelt it, over all these stiff—”

“Yeh. These Frogs won’t fight wit’out chow. I was over there. It’s a kinda mutton stew. I scoffed some before they run me off.”

“Frogs been in the war longer’n we have. We’ll get that way—such as last it out. Say—them Senegalese is *bon* fighters! Never thought a nigger’d fight—but did you see ’em in the woods?”

"Boy, howdy! The way they walked into the ole Boche with they knives! An' I saw one cuttin' the ears off a Heinie he got with his bay'net——"

"Rather fight any troops I ever saw than them niggers—got to kill 'em to stop 'em."

"Well, they ain't like any niggers I ever saw. They's built like a destroyer—long an' sharp—rangy cusses. Haven't got flat noses an' gourd-heads like a cawn-fiel' nigger down South."

"Th' Lootenant says they ain't niggers, exactly. Says they got a lot of Bedou-win or something in 'em. They all these here Mohammedans. B'lieve in Allah. B'lieve if they get killed they go straight to Heaven—hear 'em yellin' 'Allah' in that strong point just inside the woods—you know—past where little Tritt got his?"

"Don't know what they was yellin', but it sounded dangerous, I'll tell the cock-eyed world! Man, they're nasty fighters—tell you what I saw——"

"Yeh, they fit," said Sergeant Robert Slover, whose sleeve now interested abundant flies where he had wiped his bayonet on it. "We all fit. But when in hell do we eat?"

There was a commotion down the ravine, from the direction of Vierzy. Somebody caught a magic word.

"Lootenant, sir, that looks like our galleys yonder——"

It was. They came, ration carts and rolling kitchens, the mules lathered, the men hot and panting. The company mess sergeant, an old-time marine of Polish extraction, with a three-days'

beard and the harassed air mess sergeants always have, clumped up and saluted.

"Report for orders, sir. Bad time gettin' here. Since we left Croutte, sir, we——"

"All right! All right! Why haven't you got a fire in that buzzicot? You can have a fire, movin'. Don't you know when these men ate last?"

"Sir, we got bum sailin' orders an' stood into that town yonder. They wuz shellin' the road, but we didn't lose no mules—only couple messmen. Then they sent us out here, an' they was still shellin' the road, an' we come right along, makin' knots, an' the fires kinder jolted out. But I can light off one right away——"

"Don't stand here wind-jammin'—always were a sea-lawyer. Rustle some chow. What you got?"

"Well, sir, we got some rice, mostly, an' some coffee, an' there's a few cans of corn bill but not enough to issue. I reckon I can cook up a sort of slum, sir. Only, about them two messmen what's casualties—can I get two——"

"You traded that corn bill for cognac somewhere, an' then drank all the cognac—I know you!" said the Lieutenant bitterly. "Tell Sergeant Cannon I said to give you a man—now get under way."

All this was highly unjust to the galley force and the supply people, who are as well-intentioned and hard-working fives as ever lived. But hungry men are not reasonable.

The mess sergeant bustled off. "Lieutenant's got a terrible grouch. Better get some coffee into him."

The galley—with a pair of new shrapnel holes in the pipe, proudly displayed by the cook—smoked up. The men got out mess kits and waited, re-

signed and patient like all good soldiers who trust in God and the quartermaster. "Ain't it jus' like a damn Q. M. to send up rice when you need quick chow?"

The Lieutenant reclined against a rock and tried to doze. When you connected up with your rations again, things weren't so bad. Thinking it over, it had been a *bon* fight, though not so good today, judging from the 6th Regiment casualties coming back—a lot of them. You never knew much about a fight until afterwards; this one should be worth studying . . . "Looked like a perfect surprise, from where we sat. And I'm glad to have seen that Senegalese outfit in action. Very worthy men. Never saw many niggers down home that would fight—but this outfit—they're different . . ."

There was a racket, and the mess sergeant came, so mad that he couldn't swear. He propelled before him a tall, sullen soldier in the uniform of the Moroccan Division, a hard-looking darky with an outthrust lip and rolling, angry eyes. In each paw the fellow clutched a tin of corned beef, and his musette bag bulged on his hip. The mess sergeant had him by the collar and the arm, and several of the galley force attended, with weapons in their hands. The mess sergeant halted his captive violently, and spoke:

"Sorry to disturb the Lootenant, but——"

"Oh, hell—can't a man shut his eyes? All right, what is it now?" The Lieutenant sat up. "What the devil you doin' with that Senegalese? You know orders are to have no foolishness with these Frogs."

"Sir, we're gettin' a sort of slum ready, like the

Lootenant ordered, for the comp'ny, which the comp'ny hasn't had no chow they tell me since two days before yestiddy, which we're gettin' ready as fast as we can, what with that new guy Sergeant Cannon give me in place of two messmen we got bumped off on the road, and——"

"Yes, yes—I know all that. I want to know, what are you doin' with that Senegalese?"

The mess sergeant loved to present a report decently and in order, with all the facts duly marshaled; but he knew when to humor an officer. He drew a long breath and started over, with less gusto. "Yes, sir. It was like this, sir: I just found this nigger in my ration cart. He's walkin' off with our corn bill which we haven't got more'n enough to go with this slum we're cookin' up. Had his musette bag full an' a can in each hand—look at it, sir. I started to kill him, but rememberin' your order, sir, not to have no foolishness with these here Frog outfits, I brought him up to the Lootenant. We can just take him off and shoot him, quiet like, if the Lootenant wants." The mess sergeant cast his eyes around, looking for a seemly place.

"Stealin' my corn bill, hey? Lordamighty!" The Lieutenant breathed through his nose and searched his soul for adequate expressions. He knew a little French, but that language wasn't violent enough. He launched into the idiom of his native South. "Why, you damn' ornery black son of a——"

The angry face under the French helmet relaxed, lighted up, and split in a white-toothed grin. "Why, boss—Lawd, sah, is you from the Souf?"

The Lieutenant stopped midway in a searing

passage. It was a long time since he had heard the gentle, drawling darky speech of the land where he was born. He said mildly, "Of course I'm from the South. What's it to you, damn your eyes?"

"Why, bless Gawd, sah—Ah'm from Galveston, Texas, my ownself—yessah, Galveston, Texas!"

It is a far cry from that white city that drowns by the Gulf to Soissons fight, but service in the Marines had cured the Lieutenant of being surprised.

"Let this man go, Mess Sergeant; I think he's a friend of mine. All right—you heard me. Boy—just give that corn bill back to the mess sergeant; you know a man don't steal chickens close to home. Now, what are you doin' in that uniform? I know Galveston mighty well. Sort of raised there."

Profoundly stricken, the mess sergeant unhanded his man. If he hadn't seen it, he wouldn't have believed it. He retired with his corn bill and his messman, growling, "Must be the Lootenant's light-headed from not havin' his ration in so long. Or maybe it's this here shell-shock. Damn' if I ever saw . . ."

The big negro pulled his blouse back into shape and shook himself; you observed that he had a high, soldierly look. "Sho' is a rough-talkin' w'ite man! Cap'n, sah, is dat a Bull Dur'm cigaret? Thankee, sah." He rolled one adroitly, had out a *briquet*, and inhaled luxuriously. "Cap'n, sah, if Ah'd knowed you was home folks, Ah never would have gone round dat ole wagon—nossah! Thought dey was jus' w'ite trash, like. How'd Ah git heah? You never heard tell such a thing in all yo' bawn days—Ah never did, either—but heah Ah is—sho'!

"You 'member, sah, some yeahs back, it's a right hahd yeah on us stevedoh boys at Galveston? Sho' was; ships quit comin', they warn't no cotton movin', us dam-neah stahved.

"Atter w'ile, we heahs they's a wah on; dey was some talk of it in Galveston; but us stevedohs we jus' figgered it was w'ite folks' doin's, and we never paid no 'tention, special. But things git powerful tight on de water-front. Ah don't eat reg'lar a-tall! Den one o' dese cattle boats come in, what handles mules. De mules stahts comin', an' befo' Gawd, Ah never knew dere was so many mules in de worl'! We loads 'em on de cattle boat, an' de Cap'n say he want some boys what ain't skeered of mules to take cyah of de mules on de boat."

Yes—one remembered. In Texas that year the cotton crop rotted on the stalk because it was cheaper to let it rot than to pick and gin it. And presently came officers of the French and British services, buying horses and mules . . .

"De pay was good, an' Ah kinder has a itchin' foot anyway, an' like Ah say, Ah ain't been eatin' reg'lar. So Ah goes along.

"We sails, an' Ah gets me a misery in mah belly an' can't eat no grub, but Ah gets over it. Finely, we gets to a place dey call *Mair-say*—dat's it—*Mair-say*. It's a bigger town dan Galveston, but de folks is funny folks. All de mules gits off de ship, an' de Cap'n he take me asho' to ca'hy he bag for 'im. W'en he git to de ho-tel, he tell me to go on back to de ship or de paterollers git me. Sho' nuff, dey's a slew o' sogers aroun'. Well, Ah stahts, but Ah been powerful dry on dat ship, an' Ah stops to git me a little dram—some of dis coon-yac.

Cap'n, is you ever tried dat coon-yac? It sho' is noble booze! Den Ah gits me some mo' coon-yac, an' Ah don' feel so lonesome. Ah steps aroun' to see de town.

"Ah sees a colored man, like me, standin' on de corneh. He's got on de nobles' clo'es you evah seed in your life. Dressed up jus' like a lodge membah. He's got on a little red hat widout no brim, an' a little blue jacket, an' a red sash, and gre't big red pants, all baggy-like. Ah ask him what he b'long to. Ah says to mahself, if Ah can git a suit like that, sho' will knock dem Galveston niggers dead! Well, he don' say nothin'. Fust-off, Ah thinks he jus' uppity, because of he pants maybe, but de fac' was, he was jus' plain ignerunt. He's one of dese French niggers, from Africa, an' he ain't never learn to talk mah talk.

"Then Ah say somethin' 'bout coon-yac, 'cause Ah'm stickin' wid them pants, an' he know coon-yac all right. We go in a s'loon, an' we has some. They's a man in there what ask me what Ah want. Ah tell him Ah like them pants. He laff fit to kill, an' he say he fix it up. Well, we drinks right smaht coon-yac, an' some time that night we go out to de *caserne*, where dis French nigger live at. It 'pear like he in de ahmy. An' dats what happen to me. Dey jus'—to make a long story short, like my ole Granmammy Caledonia uster say—dey done take me by the nap of de neck an' de seat of de britches an' fling me in dis damn wah! An' heah Ah is."

The Lieutenant considered; negroes interested him. There had been negroes around him all his life. This boy was a rare type; reminded you of old Mingo, on his father's place in the far South:

reminded you of the tall savage who, they told, had been the body-servant of that old lion Sam Houston. Fellow had a certain dignity; good features. "Anything can happen—specially in a war—and it frequently does! Struck one of those French Colonial devils with a sense of humor—yeh." They talked of Galveston, of Church Street, and the Strand, and Tremont. "He's a Galveston ducky, all right."

"Say, where'd you get that?"

The negro had the inevitable *Croix de Guerre*; the crimson *foutragere* of the *Légion d'Honneur* was part of the uniform of that fine Moroccan Division, famous from Tonquin to the Yser. But in the French service one must do something very exceptional and amazing to wear the green and yellow ribbon of the *Médaille Militaire*. Only generals commanding armies, and enlisted men, can win it; and only for conspicuous service to the Republic.

"Dey gives me dat in the horspittal, attar a fight we had at dat place, Verdun. We was down souf somewheres for de wintertime, wukkin' on de roads. Dey hists us out in de middle of de night, an' we goes in camions two-three days to Verdun, where it 'pears like ole Boche is breakin' thoo de w'ite sogers. Dey's a ole foht name Douaumont; we has de hell of a rukkus in dere! Cap'n, dat was hell to pay an' no pitch hot! Snow on de groun'. Powerful col'—Ah mos' froze. Ah kills a Boche wid mah bay'-net and it breaks. Trouble wid dese French bay'-nets, dey always breaks, 'less'n you juk 'em out right. Mine breaks, an' de nex' Boche, Ah snatches de th'oot right outer him. Den Ah fin's me a knife, an' Ah jus' natcherly raises hell. Ah was right mad.

Ah got hu't bad mah ownself, an' dey gives me dis in de horspittal."

One remembers communiqués, read in languid West Indian stations. They were rushed up over that road the French call the *Via Sacra*, reserves from anywhere, while seven divisions of old French Territorials fought forty divisions of German storm-troops for the Verdun gate . . . Those seven divisions, they do not exist now; their flags are hung in the Pantheon, with the old relics of the Land of the Lilies. The Third Guards, whom the proud Brandenburgers called the Cockchafers, took Douaumont; Mangin's Colonials, attacking terribly through the February snows, threw them out . . . Yes—man gets an arm and a shoulder on him, handling cotton bales on a Galveston wharf . . .

"Cap'n, Ah tell you a funny thing. It come to me, heah in dis wah, dat Ah ain't skeered of anything any mo'. Never was a skeery nigger like some, but now dere ain't nothin'—— My ole Granmammy Caledonia, she was kinder quality folks. She come outer de Old States wid de fambly of ole Generul Kittrelle—you know, de old Generul dat whip all de Yankees, in de Wah. Befo' dat, she come from Africa her ownself. She allus told us when we was little dat we was quality niggers, an' she 'lowed her folks was kings, like, in Africa. She uster say she never knowed nobody else aroun' dere whut had kings in dey fambly. We never associate wid trash niggers, what she call 'em. She was proud of bein' black, an' she raise us dat way."

"H'm. What you going to do when you get back to Galveston?" asked the Lieutenant. "Seems to me——"

The man wrestled with a thought. Then: "Cap'n, sah, yu knows how it is in de Souf. Sometimes Ah gets such a honin' for Galveston, Ah could mos' die. Right now, Ah wish Ah had a mess o' greens, wid side-meat, cawn-pone, an' pot-likker. Couldn't relish dese vittles for a long time. But it's reg'lar——"

"Chow ought to be up most any minute now. I'll——"

"Cap'n, Ah dunno. Ah done foun' out Ah'm a fightin' man. Ole Granmammy Caledonia, she done daid. Most of them Galveston niggers is trash niggers. An' so"—he flashed his white teeth—"Ah ain't vexin' mahself 'bout after de wah. Be a wah, long as Ah'm heah. Dis here's a fightin' bunch, dis *Première Division de la Maroc*." He pronounced the words like a native. "Las' week we was fightin' over in front of dat town Rheims. Three-four times Ah been in fights over that way. Dey throws us in when de w'ite sogers—less'n it's de *Chasseurs d'Alpin* or *la Légion*—jus' natcherly can't cut de mustard. Dat's how come we heah. We goes in, an' we breaks de line, an' we comes out. We is quality folks our ownselfs! Only, eve'y time we comes out, a lot don' come out wid us. Ah got a chahm, an' all dese African boys got chahms—but we all killable. Ah done got huht five time. But Ah's tough; Ah comes back. Ah——"

"How do you get on with those African fellows?"

"Gets on fine, sah. Ah talk dere talk—allus pick up a wuhd easy—Ah uster to talk wid dem Greeks what take de Gulf Fish'ries boats down to Cam-pechey. An' Mexicans. Dey fights, an' den

dey got a game like craps, only diff' runt. Ah gets along."

"All Mohammedans, ain't they?"

"Dat's it—'Allah-il——' " He threw back his head and intoned strangely, then laughed like a child.

"That's it," said the Lieutenant. "Heard you in the woods yesterday. 'Allah is one God, and Mohammed is His Prophet.' It means something like that, doesn't it?"

"Reckon so, sah—don' know it in mah talk. We got a pahson wid us—only we calls him a mullah. He tell you all that. He say, if you get killed fightin' you go straight to paradise—Ah reckon. Paradise, it's a place, neah as Ah can make out, where dere's lots of gin an' women, an' a right good game goin' in the corneh. Kinder like ole Queen Laura's place on Church Street, only dere ain't no p'lice. It's a right good religion fer a fightin' man. Ah jined."

"Well, you did first-rate in the woods yesterday. Was with some of you—only troops we ever met that could keep up with the Marines."

"Cap'n, ain't it de troof! We seen you-all in dere. Ole Boche thought Chris'mus come sho'nuff! We hit him an' you hit him——"

Well, why not? The slavers bartered for slaves with the strong coast tribes of West Africa. The coast tribes captured some in war, but caught most of them by raids on the low, weak peoples—poor creatures with depressed skulls, from the Congo swamps under the Equator, just a hair removed from the gorillas. Now and then a sprig of one of the great black races, taken in battle, or betrayed

in some quarrel around a throne, might be thrust into a consignment of black ivory, bound to Marblehead or Baltimore—the strain would persist. And there have been great black races, like the fighting Zulus. One remembers Lobengula, and El Mahdi, the Prophet of God, whose naked warriors made vast trouble for British Imperial troops, armed with Martinis and Gatling guns.

“ ‘Bout goin’ back—no, sah. But Ah sho’ is glad Ah seen you, sah. An’ w’en you gits back to Galveston, Ah’d be mighty proud if you would—Hit ’pears to me, sah, like your grub done ready.”

The Lieutenant got to his feet. The Marines were lining up, hopefully, on the galley. The mess sergeant approached, looked sadly at the negro and saluted.

“Pipe for chow, sir?”

“Let ’em have it, Mess Sergeant. And say, you take this man and fill him up. Yes, he’s a friend of mine. All right, let’s see what you’ve got. It ain’t greens and side-meat, boy, but it ain’t Frog rations, either.” He inspected the food sketchily and dived into a mess kit himself.

Later, the Major sent for him over some detail or other. When he got back to the company, they moved down into Vierzy and slept in a cave. Then they went out, and a week afterward the Division shook down for a while in a delightfully quiet sector near Pont-à-Mousson.

They heard, there, that Mangin’s X. Army had attacked again, along the Chemin des Dames. The Lieutenant, on his way to Nancy for a twenty-four-hour leave, stopped by Division Headquarters and

drank wine with that elegant liaison officer, the Comte LeFebvre.

"Yes, I have heard," said the Comte, savoring his wine. He had a silver plate in his head, and his left hand was always gloved, because it was artificial; he had been with Mangin in the Champagne the year before, and was interested in the X. Army. "Ah, yes, it was a *pas de bec*. Quite the greatest artillery concentration we ever effected; one fears there was too much, for it warned the Boche. He was, as you droll chaps say, all set for us. That cave region, you know. We had heavy losses and gained little.

"The First Moroccan Division? Yes, those poor niggers—they suffered many casualties. I understand that some battalions were destroyed entirely . . . I beg pardon?"

"And I don't even know his name—pardon me, Comte—I just thought of something . . ."

MY TRAIL UPWARD

By Chief Long Lance

MISSIONARIES on a Blackfoot Indian Reservation in southern Alberta taught me my A B C's—but an old-fashioned bartender out in Laramie, Wyoming, first thrilled me with the idea that I might become educated and really make something out of my life.

This man was a Pennsylvania Dutchman and so he happened to know about Carlisle Indian School. He asked me one day when I was in the old Central Bar with a crowd of cowboys why I did not go there and become educated. He explained that it was free for Indians.

"But I can't even speak good English," I told him.

"Well," he said, "you can educate yourself for entrance to Carlisle by reading. Read, read all the time—anything and everything you come across."

I think that bit of advice changed the trend of my whole life. I was at that time sixteen years old and a full-fledged cowhand. I could break and ride bucking horses. I could barely sign my own name and spell out words. But I could ride almost anything that stood on four feet. I was proud to be a cowpuncher; that was doing pretty well at that for an ignorant, half savage young Indian buck.

A few days before I met this old bartender—I'm ashamed that I've forgotten his name—I had been fired from a ranch fifteen miles west of Laramie. At

that time my temper was as wild and unbridled as a wolf's, and this was the cause of the trouble.

This all happened in 1907 and I'd come down from the reservation to follow the round-ups. I had made this step on my own initiative because I was curious to know about this Pale Face who had conquered my people and compelled us to live on comparatively small reservations. Up to this time I had never done anything but follow the Indian's line of least resistance—hunt and fool around with horses. I always went on the trail alone and I thought a lot. Finally one day I made a resolution; I was going out to meet the white man on his own grounds, study him and find out just what sort of fellow he was.

My first step in this great adventure was to head south and work the round-ups. I followed the round-ups all over the northwestern plains and by late fall found myself on the Carr ranch west of Laramie. Carr had a nephew named Haley who was spending his college vacation on the ranch. Haley and I struck up a friendship and in the end he fixed it for me to stay on all winter—after the hay-ing and round-up should be completed.

The last round-up we made was on one of the outlying ranches, called the Ghost Ranch, so we moved our *remuda* over there. On the third morning it was my turn to wrangle in the "string" horses. It was a cold, windy morning in late October and I had to roll out at four o'clock. Prowling coyotes were still yipping their dolorous chorus here and there in the gray blueness just preceding dawn.

I was riding along with my hand over my mouth chanting my medicine song so that the herd would

not be frightened when I should come upon them in the darkness, when suddenly my horse stepped into a badger hole, jumped, tripped, fell and threw me to the ground with such force that I had to gasp for breath. I got up, stunned, and saw Curly tearing with kicking heels over towards the large herd of horses I had come out after. He was bucking for all he was worth, trying to kick off the saddle, which was now under his belly. Just before he reached the herd his front feet became locked in the bridle-reins, and I limped over and got him.

The wind was terrific, and every time I folded the saddle-blanket and threw it over Curly's back he would buck wildly and send it speeding on the wind unfolded, flattened-out and flapping like a big bat. I now remembered that the boss-hostler had warned me on the night before that Curly was an ornery horse, and that I had better watch him. It took me nearly a half-hour to get the saddle on without the blanket. Curly bucked and tried to kettle me at every step of the three-mile journey back to the corral. Breakfast would be over by now, I knew; and the boys would be smoking and waiting for their "strings." I got madder and madder at each hop.

I was not fit to speak to when I finally reached the corral and found the boss-hostler waiting at the gate with several men. I drove my horses into the corral and started to turn around and go after another bunch of horses which had nighted in a different locality. But Curly absolutely refused to budge in any direction except that of the corral gate. Every time I put the spurs to him he reared as high as he could go and threatened to check back on me.

The boss-hostler was cussing and I was stewing to the bursting point quietly.

Finally, when Curly jumped up on his hind feet and snorted out his resentment for about the eighth time, the naked Indian in me exploded. I jerked myself to a standing position in the stirrups and hurled my fist as hard as I could on top of his head. To my surprise, he sank to the ground on his knees, out. It was an inglorious thing for me to do, and the boss-hostler rightly called me a name. I retaliated, and we were closing in to fight when some of the fellows grabbed us and held us apart.

Naturally, I was fired. And, incidentally, that was the last ranch job I ever had. I walked the sixteen miles into Laramie very downcast. Just when I had thought that I had a steady job and was making my way in the new world, it all ended so quickly I hardly knew how it happened. I resolved not to cut my hair again; I would go back to the blanket.

I went back into Laramie and renewed an acquaintance with Frank Stone—"The Nevada Wonder"—at that time world's champion bucking horse rider. He had ridden the famous short-legged Steamboat to a sitting position at the Laramie Frontier Day that fall, and I had ridden a horse called Medicine Bow. He thought I could ride, and that is why he invited me to go around with him and his gang. Stone introduced me to the bartender of the Central Bar, and it was he who first put the idea of the Carlisle Indian School into my mind.

But it was only an idea tucked way in the back of my brain. At that time I thought I was through

with the white men. I thought they had mistreated me because I was an Indian. And that afternoon I bought an unbroken cayuse for seven dollars, threw my tarpaulin over his back, in lieu of a saddle, and went north to the Indians, breaking him as I rode.

Shortly after this I was included among a band of Indians selected to make a tour with Colonel Cody, who was known all over the world as "Buffalo Bill." We traveled widely for a year—I do not know where we traveled, as all cities looked alike to me then, but I often see places now where I know I have been before. I was still a boy, and my bobbed hair had again grown so that I could braid it.

Something happened at the very beginning of this tour which had a tremendous influence on my life. One afternoon the chiefs and some of the older Indians were taken out to a wealthy American's home and served with refreshments; and some of us youngsters were taken along. This chap had a lot of friends in to meet us, and he introduced us as "real Americans." Personally, this was the first time I had ever met any "real Americans," and seen how they lived in their homes—and I liked them. They were different from any I had ever met. They had the dignity that the Indian likes, and they did not *yapiota*—talk too much. An Indian distrusts anyone who talks a lot. These people so impressed me with their bearing and their environment that I decided on the spot, "I am going to be like that."

Then it was that I remembered the Laramie bartender's advice, and on the strength of that and the smattering of the "three R's" I had learned at a mission, I began forthwith to read everything I

could get my hands on. I bought a dictionary to help me translate the English tongue. I never passed a word in my reading without finding out its full meaning, with its principal synonyms and antonyms. By the fall of 1909 I had prepared myself for entrance to the Carlisle Indian School.

Though I had a tremendous will to learn, my brain was as tough as raw buffalo meat when I arrived at this famous old institution. I could not make the first-year class, but the instructors, evidently sensing that I was a willing student, shoved me into the class anyway, and sat up nights teaching me on the side. Miss Adelaide B. Reichel taught me English at night, and Major Rudy would sit up until one o'clock in the morning trying to drum into my thick skull the intricacies of algebra. I was almost a hopeless case, but I had one faculty which saved me, and that was my thoroughness in learning every detail of a thing, and once learning it, never forgetting. Years later when I was attending a white school—St. John's Military School, Manlius, New York—I sat up at nights and worked the geometry and trigonometry problems for nearly every other student in my section of Hadley Hall—because I had learned every rule as I went and they had not.

I skipped the junior class at Carlisle and graduated in 1912 as the honor graduate and valedictorian—with a senior year's average of $92\frac{1}{2}$ points. Having gone into athletics at Carlisle, to offset the indoor life and the mental strain of learning, I now found that it was possible to go on to higher schools on my athletic ability. I attended Conway Hall, Dickinson College, a year, and then received a

scholarship to St. John's Military School, at Manlius, where I took postgraduate work and graduated in 1915 with a silver medal for class and athletic honors.

Here it was that I learned one of the most important things that have to do with white man's society—the art of conversation. It came about in a peculiar manner.

During my first year at St. John's one of the boys who was friendly to me said: "Long Lance, why are you always so silent? Why don't you talk more? You know, the cadets like you but they can't understand why you are so backward about talking."

Of course it had never occurred to me before to "make" conversation. Among themselves, Indians speak seldom and then only when they have something important to say. They never talk just to be talking. And now I saw for the first time that there was a different custom among white men.

I started at once to change all this in my own make-up. I began to make talk consciously—little talk about little things. Now—ten years later—it comes natural for me to converse, but I had to learn how to do it just as I had to learn how to read English or tie a white man's tie.

There was another important thing that I learned at St. John's. General William Verbeck had a lot to do with that—just as he had a great deal to do with instilling into me the polish and graces of modern civilization.

Since the day back in Wyoming when I had lost my temper and popped poor old Curly on the head, I had had two dangerous fights, both before

I entered school. In one of them a friend had knocked me senseless with a six-shooter to prevent me from driving a knife into a fellow being on whose chest I sat. Two weeks later a six-shooter leveled at this same fellow being was knocked out of my hand just as I was pulling the trigger. It is only necessary to say that a feud existed between us, and he had sworn to get me.

At St. John's this old temper, which I thought I had conquered, popped up again one day, and I struck a fellow cadet. I was courtmartialed and reduced to the ranks; and General Verbeck had me into his private office for a talk.

He pointed out to me that my uncontrolled temper was the only thing that would hold me back in life, and warned me that if I should ever let it get the better of me at West Point I would be expelled in disgrace. I was under appointment to West Point by President Wilson, but on the following March I purposely "flunked" the entrance examinations at Fort Slocum, and decided that the best place for a chap who could not keep from disgracing himself and his friends was fighting under the colors of an army that was upholding a world cause. So back west and north I came. Three weeks after I had "coughed" and said "Ah-h" for the medical officer, I was on my way to France on the Olympic, as "Sergeant B. C. Long Lance, C Company, 97th Battalion, Canadian Expeditionary Force."

What General Verbeck did not teach me about holding my temper the war did. After seeing men gutted and lacerated day in and day out intermittently for nearly three years, the vengeful ego in

me disappeared. It has been supplanted by a desire to fight only for things big enough to be a principle of protection to others.

With the war over, eventually I was sent home and demobilized as a captain. And then I had to begin all over again. At twenty-five I had adopted the white man's customs, comforts and ways of thinking—and yet I had no way to earn a living commensurate with these newly acquired tastes.

Some friend suggested I go to Los Angeles, where two professions might open for me—moving picture acting or professional boxing. In France I had been Canadian light-heavyweight champion and I had been told that I could go to the very top of the heap if I continued fighting.

Almost immediately after I landed in California I was offered \$500 to fight—and the heavy barred doors into the movies were opening to me.

And, strangely enough, just then two more opportunities presented themselves: one a two-year army scholarship to study journalism in Canadian universities; and the other a reporter's job on the *Calgary Herald*.

That night I wired the *Herald* to hold that thirty-dollar-a-week job.

That was six years ago—and never for a day have I regretted my choice. Had I taken a different road I might have been light-heavy champion of the world—Jack Dempsey told me he would make me that in six months—and I might have been a movie star. And if I had accepted that university scholarship I might be working today on the *Calgary Herald* at thirty dollars a week.

As it is I am pretty much of a free man. I travel about a bit, lecture a bit, write a bit—and when summer comes I'm up in the Rockies. My play-work at Banff is better than being all the movie stars and prize-fight champions in the world.

Two or three times a year I go back to my Indian reservation, where I spent my boyhood and where my people still live. I was proud when they elected me a Chief. I had won my spurs fighting side by side with the white men—and my tribe had recognized this.

I'm proud to be as much like a white man as I am—but I'm proud, too, of every drop of Indian blood that runs through my veins.

I'm proud of my Indian heritage—and I'm proud, too, of the land and people of my adoption.

I have reached no dizzy heights of material success, but I have succeeded in pulling myself up by my boot straps from a primitive and backward life into this great new world of white civilization.

Anyone with determination and will can do as much.

THREE WISE MEN OF THE EAST SIDE

By Irvin S. Cobb

WHILE he was in the death-house Tony Scarra did a lot of thinking. You couldn't imagine a better place for thinking; it goes on practically all the time there, and intensively. But no matter where the thoughts range and no matter what elements enter into them—hope or despair, rebellion or resignation, or whatever—sooner or later they fly back, like dark homing pigeons, to a small iron door opening upon a room in which there is a chair with straps dangling from its arms and from its legs and its head-rest—in short, the Chair. This picture is the beginning and the end of all the thinking that is done in the death-house.

Such were the facts with regard to Tony Scarra. As nearly as might be judged, he felt no remorse for the murdering which had brought him to his present trapped estate. But he did have a deep regret for the entanglement of circumstances responsible for his capture and conviction. And constantly he had a profound sense of injustice. It seemed to him that in his case the law had been most terribly unreasonable. Statistics showed that for every seventy-four homicides committed in this state only one person actually went to the Chair. He'd read that in a paper during the trial. It had been of some comfort to him. Now he brooded on these figures. Over and over and over again, brooding on them, he asked himself about it.

Why should he have to be the unlucky one of seventy-four? Was it fair to let seventy-three other guys go free or let them off with prison sentences and then shoot the whole works to him? Was that a square deal? Why did it have to be that way, anyhow? What was the sense of it? Why pick on him? Why must he go through with it? Why—that was just it—why? The question-marks were so many sharp fishhooks all pricking down into his brain and hanging on.

His calling had made a sort of fatalist out of Tony Scarra. His present position was in a fair way to make a sort of anarchist out of him.

All the way through his lawyer kept trying to explain to him touching on the lamentable rule of averages. He was not concerned with averages though. He was concerned with the great central idea of saving his life. To that extent his mind had become a lopsided mind. Its slants all ran the same way, like shingles on a roof that slopes.

At length there came a morning when the death-house seemed to close in on him, tighter and tighter. It no longer was a steel box to enclose him; it became a steel vise and pinched him. This Scarra was not what you would call an emotional animal, nor a particularly imaginative one. Even so, and suddenly, he saw those bolt-heads in the ironwork as staring unmerciful eyes all vigilantly cocked to see how he took the news. And his thinking, instead of being scattered, now came to a focus upon a contingency which through weeks past he had carried in the back lobe.

"I'm just as sore about this as you are, Tony," the lawyer said. "It hurts me almost as much as it

hurts you. Why, look here, yours is the first case I ever lost—the first capital case, I mean. All the others, I got 'em off somehow—acquittal or a hung jury or a mistrial or a retrial or, if it looked bad, we took a plea in the second degree and the fellow went up the road for a stretch. It's my reputation that's at stake in this thing; this thing is bound to hurt my record—the conviction standing and all. So naturally, not only on my own account but on yours, I've done everything I could—claiming reversible errors and taking an appeal and now this last scheme of asking the judges to reopen the case on the ground of newly discovered evidence. We've fought it along with stays and delays for nearly eight months now, going all the way up to the highest court in the state, and here today I have to come up here and tell you we've been turned down there. It's hard on me, don't forget that, Tony. It'll hurt me in New York. You know what your crowd call me there—the Technicality Kid?"

"You was recommended to me as one swell mouthpiece and I sent for you and you came up and I hired you," answered Scarra in a recapitulation of vain grievances, "and you took my jack and you kept on taking it till you milked me clean, and now you stand there and tell me you're through!"

"No, I'm not through either," the lawyer made haste to say. "There's still the chance that the Governor may commute the sentence. You know how often that happens—men being reprieved right at the very last minute, as you might say. Oh, I'm going to the Governor next. We've still got nearly a month left, Tony, and a lot could happen in a month."

"Swell chance I've got with this Governor, and you know it. He's a politician, ain't he? Can't you see these here rube papers riding him if he should let off the 'Big City Gunman'? Ain't that their gentlest name for me? No, you quit stalling and listen to me a minute."

There was a tight, strong iron grill between them; they talked with each other through the meshes, and as they talked a keeper watched them, keeping beyond earshot, though. All the same, Scarra following the quite unnecessary precaution of sinking his voice before saying what next he had to say. "Finburg," he whispered, "I ain't going to let these guys cook me. I'm going to beat their game yet—and you're going to help me." He twisted his mouth into the stiffened shape of a grin; the embalmed corpse of a grin. "Get that?—you're going to help me."

Counselor Finburg had eloquent shoulders. Often in debate he used them to help out his pleading hands. He lifted both of them in a shrug of confessed helplessness. Nevertheless his expression invited further confidences. It was as much as to say that this was a poor unfortunate friend who, having a delusion, must be humored in it.

"Don't start that stuff with me," went on Scarra, correctly interpreting the look; "not till you've heard what I got to tell you. Finburg, if I got to croak, I got to croak, that's all. I took plenty chances in my time on being bumped off and I've seen more'n one guy getting his—what I mean, more'n one besides that hick cop that I fixed his clock for him. If it hadn't been for him I wouldn't been here. But that ain't the main thing. The

main thing is that I ain't going let 'em make cold meat out of me in that kitchen of theirs out there. I'll beat 'em to it, that's all. I couldn't stand it.

"They say it's absolutely—you know"—Mr. Finburg's lips were reluctant to form the word—"well, painless—and, of course, instantaneous."

"Who says so? A bunch of wise-cracking doctors, that's who. What do they know about it? Any of them ever try to find out? Finburg, I had a brother and he knew about electricity—was a lineman for a high-tension power company. I've heard him tell about being caught in them currents; heard him tell what other guys went through that caught a big jolt of the juice. The first shock don't always put a guy out. He may look to be dead but he ain't—he's stuck there waiting for the next shot—waiting, waiting. Well, not for me—I'm going to do my own croaking—with a little help from outside. And that's where you figure in."

Involuntarily, Finburg made as if to back away. His body shrank back but his feet rooted him fast. A fascination held him.

"You ain't going to lose anything by it," maintained the caged man, pressing his point. "You're going to make by it."

"No, no, no!" Finburg strove to make his dissent emphatic. "Oh, no, Scarra, I'd like to do you any favor in my power but I couldn't do that. Why, man, it's against the law. It's conniving at a suicide. It makes the man who does it an accessory."

"Swell law that wants to croak a poor guy and yet calls it a crime if somebody helps him croak himself!" commented Scarra. "Still, I know about

that part of it already. What if I tell you you ain't running any risk? And what if you clean up on the deal yourself? You've been knocking holes in the law ever since you got your license. Why're you weakening now?"

"But—but if you're determined to go this way, why not use something in your cell—some utensil, say?" suggested the nervous Finburg. Already he felt guilty. His cautious voice had a guilty quaver in it.

"With them bringing me my grub already cut up and only a spoon to eat it with—*huh!*" the murderer grunted. "Why, even the tooth-brush they gave me has got a limber handle on it. Anyhow, I ain't craving to make a messy job of it. I'm going clean and I'm going quick. What I want is just a nice little jolt of this here cyanide of potassium. You know about that stuff? You swallow it and it's all over in a minute. That's what I want—one little shot of that cyanide stuff. I ain't going to take it till the last hope's gone—a miracle might happen with that Governor yet. But when they come to take me out to be juiced in that chair, why, down goes the little pill and out goes Tony, laughing in their foolish faces. I ain't scared to go my way, you understand, but"—he sucked in his breath—"but I'm scared to go their way and I might as well admit it."

Still on the defensive and the negative, Finburg had been shaking his head through this, but his next speech belied his attitude. Being rent between two crossed emotions—a sinking fear for his own safety, a climbing, growing avarice—he said in a soft, wheedling tone: "You mentioned just now about

my making something out of—this? Not that I'd even consider such a dangerous proposition," he added hastily. "I—I just wanted to know what you had on your mind, that's all."

"I thought that'd interest you! Listen, Finburg, All along, I've been holding out on you. I been keeping an ace in the hole in case we should lose out on the appeal. You thought you'd taken the last cent of fall-money I could dig up for fighting my case for me, didn't you? Well, kid, you went wrong there. You remember the big Bergen Trust Company hold-up down in New Jersey early last spring, don't you?"

"Yes." Finburg's jaws relaxed the least bit to let a greedy tongue lick out.

"Then you remember, probably, that quite a chunk of negotiable securities—bonds and things—wasn't never recovered?"

"Yes, I recall." Finburg suggested a furtive jackal, tense with a mounting hunger and smelling afar off a bait of rich but forbidden food.

"And that the trust company people offered a reward of ten thousand for the return of that stuff and no questions asked?"

"Yes, go on."

"Well, Finburg, you're smart but here's something you never knew before. I was in on that hold-up—I engineered it. And inside of three weeks afterwards, while I was waiting for the squawk over that job to die down, I came up here and got in this jam and had to plug this cop and they nailed me with the goods. But, Finburg, I've got a safe-deposit box in a bank on Third Avenue and I've got a key to it stuck away in another place

where a pal's keeping it for me—a pal I can trust. I'll leave you guess what's in that safe-deposit box. Or, if you want me to, I'll tell——”

“No, don't tell me—that would be illegal,” said the lawyer very uneasily and yet very eagerly. “It would be more regular, you understand, if I didn't actually have knowledge of what the contents were—that is, beforehand. I've been double-crossed before by some of you hard-boiled people. There was the time when I almost worked my head off defending Roxie McGill and her mob for shoving phony money, and every time I think of how that McGill skirt slipped it over on me, when it came time to settle up”—he winced on what plainly was a most painful recollection—“well, it's made me careful, Tony, awfully careful. Not that I'm doubting you, understand. If a man can't trust a——” He broke off, looking, for him, a trifle embarrassed.

“Say it!” prompted Scarra grimly. “If you can't trust a dying man you can't trust nobody—that's what you had in your mind, wasn't it? Well, I'm as good as dead right now and you won't never regret it, playing my game. It could be fixed up, according to law, couldn't it, like a will, that me not having any kinfolks, I was leaving you what was in that safe-deposit box on account of you having been my lawyer and having worked so hard for me?”

“Oh, yes, I'd know how to phrase the instrument properly. There'd be no trouble about that, none whatever, Tony.”

“All right, then, you fix up the paper and I'll sign it right here any day it's ready. And I'll give

you a written order on that pal of mine for the key, telling him to hand it over to you the day after I'm gone. You ain't got a thing to worry about. And in payment all you got to do for me is just the one little favor of getting that little pill made up and——"

"I'm telling you there's entirely too much risk," interrupted Finburg, in a timorous sweat of almost overpowering temptation, but still clinging to safety. "I wouldn't dare risk trying to slip you poison, Tony—I couldn't."

"Nobody's asking you to."

"What? What's that you're saying, Tony?" The lawyer had his peaked nose between two wattles of the steel grill.

"I say, nobody's asking you to. Knowing you, I've doped out that part of it so you won't have to take a chance. Listen, Finburg—there's a guard here in this place named Isgrīd—a Swede or something. And he comes from down on the East Side, the same as you and me. I've been working on him. We've got friendly. Maybe him and me both having been born on the same block over there beyond the Bowery was what made him sort of mushy towards me. But it ain't for friendship only that he's willing to help. He wants his bit out of it. He's aiming to quit this job he's got here and he wants to take a piece of money with him when he quits. Now, here's what he tells me: He'll be on the death-watch on me. That last night he'll slip me the pill, see? Nobody ain't going to suspect him, he says, and even if anybody does, they ain't going to be able to hang it on him, let alone get you mixed in with the plant."

"I suppose I'll have to see this man," conceded Finburg; "not that that means I'm committing myself to this undertaking."

"I thought of that too. Day after tomorrow is Sunday, and Sunday is his day off. He'll run down to New York and meet you in your office or at your flat, and you can size him up and talk it over with him."

"It can't do any harm to see the man, I suppose." It was plain that the lawyer was convincing himself. "Tell him—only, mind you, this is just an accommodation to you—tell him the address of my room and tell him to be there at ten o'clock."

"One thing more," stated the killer. "Isgrid wants one grand for his cut."

"One grand—a thousand dollars!"

"That's his lowest price. I had to work on him to cut it down to that. And, Finburg, you'll have to dig up the thou'. He wants it in advance, see? You can pay yourself back—afterwards, That's up to you."

"That makes it still more complicated," lamented the wavering Finburg. "I don't know—I don't know." Figuratively he wrung his hands in an anguish born of desire and doubt.

"Well, I'll give you till over Sunday to make up your mind, then," said Scarra, he secretly being well content with the progress that had been made. "If by Monday you've decided to go through with your share of the deal, you can come back here and bring that paper with you and I'll sign it. If you don't show up on Monday I'll know you're too chicken-hearted for your own good. Remember this, though, Finburg—one way or another I'm going to

get that pill. If you don't want to help, that's your lookout—you'll only be kissing good-by to what's down in them safe-deposit vaults on Third Avenue. And if you do—well, I guess you're wise enough to protect yourself at every angle. It's easy pickings for you, Finburg—easy pickings. So think it over before you decide to say no. Well, so long, see you Monday."

He fell back from the grating and to the keeper at the farther end of the corridor motioned to indicate that his interview with his counsel was ended and that he was ready to be taken back to his cell.

Monday morning, good and early, Mr. Finburg was back again. His mind had been made up for many hours. In fact it was made up before he left on Friday afternoon. Only, at the time he had not cared to say so or to look so. To wear a mask was one part of Mr. Finburg's professional attitude. To do things deviously was another. For him always, the longest way round was the shortest way across.

It was because of this trait of Mr. Finburg's that certain preliminary steps in the working-out of his share in the plot were elaborated and made intricate. Since Friday evening when his train landed him at the Grand Central, he had been a reasonably busy young man. From the station he went directly to the Public Library and there, at a table well apart from any other reader, he consulted a work on toxicology, with particular reference to the effects of the more deadly poisons. Before midnight he was in touch with a chemist of his acquaintance who served as laboratory sharp and chief mixer for

a bootlegging combine specializing in synthetic goods with bogus labels on them. His real purpose in this inquiry was, of course, carefully cloaked; the explanation he gave—it referred to experiments which a purely supposititious client was making with precious metals—apparently satisfied the expert, who gave information fully.

By virtue of a finely involved ramification of underworld connections, Mr. Finburg was enabled next to operate through agents. Three separate individuals figured in the transaction. But no one of the three came to know more than his particular link in a winding chain and only one of the three had direct dealings with the principal, and this one remained in complete ignorance of what really was afoot. All he knew, all he cared to know, was that having been dispatched on a mission which seemed to start nowhere and lead nowhere, he had performed what was expected of him and had been paid for it and was through. By these roundabout steps, by such deft windings in and out, Mr. Finburg satisfied himself that the trail was so broken that no investigator ever could piece it together. There were too many footprints in the trace; and too many of them pointing in seemingly opposite and contrary directions.

He was quite ready for the man Isgrid when that person came to his apartment on Sunday morning. Whether Isgrid studied Finburg is of no consequence to this narrative, but we may be quite assured that Finburg studied Isgrid, seeing the latter as a stolid, dull person, probably of Scandinavian ancestry and undoubtedly of a cheap order of mentality. For the rôle of an unthinking middleman Isgrid seemed

an admirable choice in any conspiracy. He had such a dependable dumb look about him. Nevertheless it suited Mr. Finburg's book that his dealings with this man should be marked by crafty play-acting. There sat the two of them, entirely alone, yet Mr. Finburg behaved as though a cloud of witnesses hovered to menace them.

He asked Isgrid various questions—leading questions, they would be called in court—but so phrased that they might pass for the most unsuspecting of inquiries. Then, being well satisfied by the results of such cross-examination, the lawyer came to business.

"Look here," he said, pointing, "on this table is a little box with the lid off. See it? Well, in it are twelve five-grain capsules same as you'd get from any drug-store if you had a touch of grippe and the doctor gave you a prescription to be filled. Between ourselves we'll just say it is a grippe cure that we've got here. Well, one of these capsules is stronger than the others are. If I'm not mistaken, it's this one here"—his finger pointed again—"the last one in the bottom row, the one with a little spot of red ink on it. It's marked that way so a fellow will be wised up to handling it pretty carefully.

"Now then, I'm going into the next room. I've got a wall safe there where I keep some of my private papers and other valuables, including money. I'm going to get a bill—a nice new United States Treasury certificate for one thousand dollars—out of my safe. It may take me two or three minutes to work the combination and find the bill. When I come back, if one or two of those capsules should happen to be missing, why I'll just say to myself

that somebody with a touch of grippe, or somebody who's got a friend laid up somewhere with a touch of grippe, saw this medicine here and helped himself to a dose or so without saying anything about it. It won't stick in my mind; what difference does a measly little drug-store pill or two mean to me or to anybody else, for that matter? Inside of ten minutes I'll have forgotten all about it.

"Make yourself at home, please—I'll be back in a jiffy."

He entered the inner room of the two-room flat, closing and snapping shut the connecting door behind him. When he came back, which was quite soon, he glanced at the open box. The twelfth capsule, that one which was red-dotted, and one neighboring capsule had disappeared. Isgrid was sitting where he had been seated before Finburg's temporary withdrawal.

"See this?" resumed Finburg, and he held up what he was holding in his hands. "It's a nice slick new one. Well, I've about made up my mind to slip this bill to you. You've been kind to a party that's in trouble—a party that I've had considerable dealings with. He's grateful and naturally I'm grateful, too. As I understand it, you're going to keep on being good to this party. He's in a bad way—may not live very long, in fact—and we'll both appreciate any little small attentions you might continue to show him. But this is a hard world—people get careless sometimes; you can't always depend on them. Not knocking you or anything, but still I'd like to make certain that you won't go back on any little promise you might have made to him lately. See what I'm going to do next?"

From his desk he took up a pair of scissors and with one swift clip of their blades sheared the yellow-back squarely in two across the middle. Isgrid said nothing to this but kept eying him intently.

"Now then, I put one-half of this bill into my pocket," proceeded Finburg, "and the other half I'm handing over to you"—doing so. "Separated this way, these halves are no use to anybody—none to me, none to you. But paste them together again and you've got a thousand-dollar bill that's just as good as it ever was. For the time being, you keep your half and I'll keep my half. I'll have it right here handy on my person and ready to slip it over to you when the contract that I've been speaking of is completed.

"Now, I expect to be seeing our sick friend tomorrow. Tonight I'll be fixing up a couple of documents for him to sign and I'm going to take them up to where he is in the morning. I'll tell him of this little arrangement between us and I'm certain he'll indorse it. I may not see him again until the twenty-seventh of this month." He dwelt meaningly upon the date. "It looks as though he couldn't last much longer than that—not more than a few hours. And on the twenty-seventh, if the prospects are that he'll pass out within the next twenty-four hours—which is the present outlook—I'll pay him a farewell visit. If everything has worked out right—if you've done him some last favor that he's counting on—why, he'll tip me the word while we're alone together. You won't have to wait much longer than that for what's coming to you. Just as soon as he gives me the word I'll meet you and hand you over the other half of

your bill. Is everything understood—everything agreeable to you?"

Still mute, Isgrid nodded. They shook hands on it after Isgrid had named a suitable place for their rendezvous on the twenty-seventh; then the silent caller took himself away.

Being left alone, Mr. Finburg mentally hugged himself before he set to the task of drawing up the papers for his client's signature. This same Sunday he decided not to go to the Governor of that near-by state with any futile plea for executive clemency. He'd tell Scarra, of course, that he was going; would pretend he had gone. But what was the use of a man wasting his breath on a quest so absolutely hopeless? He salved his conscience—or the place where his conscience had been before he wore it out—with this reflection, and by an effort of the will put from him any prolonged consideration of the real underlying reason. It resolved itself into this: Why should a man trifle with his luck? With Scarra wiped out—and certainly Scarra deserved wiping out, if ever a red-handed brute did—the ends of justice would be satisfied and the case might serve as a warning to other criminals. But if that Governor should turn mush-headed and withhold from Scarra his just punishment, where would Scarra's lawyer be? He'd be missing a delectable chunk of jack by a hair—that's where he would be.

Let the law take its course!

The law did. It took its racking course at quarter past one o'clock on the morning of the twenty-eighth.

Those who kept ward on Tony Scarra, considering him as scientists might consider an inoculated guinea-pig waiting patiently for this or that expected symptom of organic disorder to show itself, marveled more and more as the night wore on at the bearing of the condemned man. His, they dispassionately decided among themselves, was not the rehearsed but transparent bravado of the ordinary thug. That sort of thing they had observed before; they could bear testimony that nearly always toward the finish this make-believe fortitude melted beneath the lifting floods of a mortal terror and a mortal anguish, so that the subject lost the use of his members and the smoothness of his tongue, and babbled wild meaningless prayers and flapped with his legs and must be half-dragged, half-borne along on that first, last, short journey of his through the iron door to what awaited him beyond.

Or, fifty-fifty, it might be that imminent dread acted upon him as a merciful drug which soothed him into a sort of obedient coma wherein he yielded with a pitiful docility to the wishes of his executioners and mechanically did as they bid him, and went forth from his cell meek as a lamb, thereby simplifying and easing for them their not altogether agreeable duties. These experienced observers had come to count on one or the other of these manifestations. In Scarra neither of them was developed.

He seemed defiantly insulated against collapse by some indefinable power derived from within. He betrayed no signs whatsoever of weakening—and this, to those who officiated at those offices, seemed most remarkable of all—when they clipped the hair off the top of his skull for the pad of the electrodes

and again when they brought him the black trousers with the left leg split up the inside seam.

All at once though, at the beginning of the second hour after midnight, when the witnesses were assembled and waiting in the lethal chamber, his jaunty confidence—if so, for lack of a better description, it might be termed—drained from him in a single gush. He had called, a minute or two before, for a drink of water, complaining of a parched throat. A filled cup was brought to him. Sitting on a stool in his cell, he turned his back upon the bringer and took the draft down at a gulp, then rose and stood looking through the bars at the keepers, with a mocking, puzzling grin on his lips and over all his face and in his eyes a look of expectancy. The grin vanished, the look changed to one of enormous bewilderment, then to one of the intensest chagrin, and next he was mouthing with shocking vile words toward the eternity waiting for him. He resisted them when they went in then to fetch him out, and fought with them and screamed out and altogether upset the decorum of the death-house.

He did not curse those whose task it was now to subdue and, if possible, to calm him down. He cursed somebody or other—person or persons unknown—for having deceived him in a vital matter, crying out that he had been imposed on, that he had been double-crossed. He raved of a pill—whatever that might mean—but so frightful a state was he in, so nearly incoherent in his new frenzy of rage and distress and disappointment, that the meaning of what he spoke was swallowed up and lost.

Anyhow, his sweating handlers had no time to

listen. Their task was to muffle his blasphemery and get him to the chair, which they did.

Since he continued to struggle in the presence of the audience, the proceedings from this point on were hurried along more than is common. His last understandable words, coming from beneath the mask clamped over the upper part of his distorted face, had reference to this mysterious double-crossing of which plainly, even in that extremity, he regarded himself the victim, and on which, as was equally plain, his final bitter thoughts dwelt. The jolt of the current cut him off in a panted choking mid-speech, and the jaw dropped and the body strained up against the stout breast-harness, and the breath wheezed and rasped out across the teeth and past the lips, which instantly had turned purple, and there was a lesser sound, a curious hissing, whispering, slightly unpleasant sound, as though the life were so eager to escape from this flesh that it came bursting through the pores of the darkening skin. Also, there was a wisp of rising blue smoke and a faint, a very faint smell of something burning.

For absolute certainty of result, they gave Scarra's body a second shock, and the physicians present observed with interest how certain of the muscles, notably certain of the neck muscles, twitched in response to the throb and flow of the fluid through the tissues. But of course the man was dead. It merely was a simple galvanic reaction—say, like eel-meat twisting on a hot griddle, or severed frogs' legs jumping when you sprinkle salt on them—interesting, perhaps, but without real significance. Except for Scarra's unseemly be-

havior immediately after drinking the water, this execution, as executions go, and they nearly always go so, was an entire success.

Conceded that as to its chief purpose, the plan unaccountably had gone amiss, Mr. Finburg nevertheless felt no concern over the outcome. Privately he preferred that it should have been thus—there being no reason for any official inquiry, naturally there would be no official inquiry. Happy anticipations uplifted him as, sundry legal formulas having been complied with, he went as Scarra's heir to Scarra's bank on Third Avenue and opened Scarra's safe-deposit box.

It would seem that he, too, had been double-crossed. All the box contained was a neat small kit of burglars' tools. It was indeed a severe disappointment to Mr. Finburg, a blow to his faith in human nature. We may well feel for Mr. Finburg.

Of that triumvirate of East Side connivers, there remains the third and least important member, Isgrid, he who, scheming on his own account and in his own protection, had played for safety by smuggling to the late Scarra not number twelve, the poisonous capsule, but number eleven, the harmless one. Let us not spend all our sympathy upon Mr. Finburg but rather let us reserve some portion of it for Isgrid. For this one, he too suffered a grievous disappointment. It befell when, having patched the parted halves of his thousand-dollar bill, he undertook to pass it. It was refused, not because it was pasted together but because it was counterfeit.

THE TIGER AND THE BULLDOG

By The Rt. Hon. Winston S. Churchill

IN the days after the Germans broke our front on March 21, 1918, I used to sleep in my office at the Ministry of Munitions, so that work could go forward at all times when I was awake. Early on the morning of the 28th the Prime Minister, Mr. Lloyd George, sent for me to come to Downing Street. I found him in bed, a gray figure amid a litter of reports and telegrams.

"I cannot make out what the French are doing," he said. "Are they going to make a great effort to stop the German inrush? Can't you go over and find out? Use my authority. See Foch. See Clemenceau. Find out for yourself whether they are making a really big move or not."

I started about eleven o'clock with the Duke of Westminster as my sole companion. We crossed the Channel in a destroyer, at midnight reached Paris, and slept in the luxuries of an almost empty Ritz. Early the next morning Monsieur Clemenceau had been approached and made plans to take me to the front himself.

At eight o'clock the following morning, March 30, five military motor-cars, all decorated with the small satin tricolors of the highest authority, filled the courtyard of the rue St. Dominic. Monsieur Clemenceau, punctual to the second, descended the broad staircase of the Ministry, accompanied by his personal General and two or three other superior

officers. He greeted me most cordially in his fluent English and then we started.

In rather less than two hours the spires of Beauvais Cathedral hove in sight, and we presently pulled up at the Town Hall. We marched quickly up the steps of a stone staircase to a big room on the first floor. The double doors were opened, and before us was Foch, newly created Generalissimo of all the Allied Armies on the western front. After brief greetings we entered the room. The doors were shut.

On the wall was a map about two yards square. General Foch seized a large pencil as if it was a weapon, and, without the slightest preliminary, advanced upon the map and proceeded to describe the situation. He spoke so quickly and jumped from point to point by such large and irregular loops that I could not make any exact translation of his words, but this was his theme. "Following the fighting of the twenty-first, the Germans broke through on the twenty-second. See where they went. First stage of the invasion. Oh! Oh! Oh! How big!" He pointed to a line on the map.

"On the twenty-third they advanced again. *Deuxième journée d'invasion*. Ah! Ah! Another enormous stride. On the twenty-fourth. *Troisième journée*. *Aié! Aié!*"

But the fourth day there was a change. The lines on the map showed that the amount of territory gained by the enemy on the fourth day was less than that which they had gained on the third day. The famous Commander turned towards us and swayed from side to side, using his hands as if they were the scales of a balance.

"Oho!" he said. "*Quatrième journée. Oho! Oho!*"

We all knew that something had happened to the advancing flood. When he came to the fifth day, the zone was distinctly smaller. The sixth and the seventh zones were progressively smaller still. Foch's voice had dropped almost to a whisper. It was sufficient for him to convey with a wave of the hand the meaning which he intended.

Until finally, "*Hier, dernière journée d'invasion,*" and his whole attitude and manner flowed out in pity for this poor, weak, miserable little zone of invasion which was all that had been achieved by the enemy on the last day. One felt what a wretched, petty compass it was compared to the mighty strides of the opening days. The mighty onset was coming to a standstill.

And then suddenly in a loud voice, "Stabilization. Sure, certain, soon. And afterwards! That is my affair." He stopped.

Then Clemenceau, advancing, "*Alors, Général, il faut que je vous embrasse.*"

They both clasped each other tightly, without even their English companions being conscious of anything in the slightest degree incongruous or inappropriate. Both these men had had fierce passages in the weeks immediately preceding these events.

They had quarreled before; they were destined to quarrel again. But, thank God, at that moment the two greatest Frenchmen of this awful age were supreme and were friends. No more was said. We all trooped down the stairs, bundled into our cars, and roared and rattled off again to the north.

THE FOUR YEARS AT COLLEGE ARE WASTED

By H. G. Wells

MY skepticism about schools extends to universities, and particularly to what one might call the universities for juveniles like Oxford, Cambridge, Harvard and Yale, the annual cricket, boat-race, baseball and football universities, where every sort of intellectual activity is subordinated to a main business of attracting, boarding and amusing our adolescents.

I think that we who deal with the world's affairs have been very negligent about the things that have been done to our sons and daughters in these institutions, and that we need to give them more attention than we have shown hitherto. In England they are not giving value for the money and respect they get—less even than private schools—and in America I have a suspicion they are worse even than in England.

The day of Oxford and Cambridge as the main nuclei of the general education of a great empire, draws to an end. Since the war this has become very evident.

These universities fail to do any adequate educational work upon the larger part of the youngsters who spend what are perhaps the cardinal years of their lives in their colleges. Only a minority do sound work. They do it against the current of opinion. Much of it they could do better in closer touch with London or in any other habitable town.

Both Oxford and Cambridge lie in low river valleys; the heavy air demands much time out of every day for exercise and a vast industry of games has grown up to overshadow all intellectual activities. In spite of such exertions, there is a prevailing slackness. There is a tradition of irrelevance, which only the most resolute workers escape.

There is no effective supervision by the tutors who are supposed to guide the mental growth of the undergraduates, and a considerable number of these youngsters waste their time in little musical and dramatic societies that lead neither to musical nor to dramatic achievement, and in similar forms of amateurism. Such opportunities for frittering away time are endless.

Few of the dons are of a quality to grip the undergraduate imagination. Many of the most conspicuous seem to be wilful "freaks" who set out to be talked about. Nowadays these dons seem more disposed to carry on the traditions of discouragement and suppression that dominate the great English public schools than to excite a new generation to vigorous thought and effort.

Cambridge University has recently done its best to dismiss a great teacher of biology because he was correspondent in a divorce suit.

Oxford, I see, proposes to dismiss all youthful communists. By such tokens these places put the repressive training of the young above knowledge and freedom of thought.

I encounter a growing discontent with Oxford and Cambridge among many of my friends who have had undergraduate sons. I know three or four who have been bitterly disappointed in reasonable

hopes. They send their boys trustfully and hopefully to these overrated centers. They find themselves confronted with pleasant, easy-going, evasive young men, up to nothing in particular and schooled out of faith, passion or ambition.

I think we must be prepared to cut out this three- or four-year holiday at Oxford or Cambridge, and their American compeers, from the lives of the young men we hope to see playing leading parts in the affairs of the world. It is too grave a loss of time at a crucial period; it establishes the defensive attitude too firmly in the face of the forcible needs of life.

I offer no suggestions about the education of girls because I know very little about it, but the conviction has grown upon me in the last few years that as early as fifteen or sixteen, a youth should be brought into contact with realities and kept in contact with realities from that age on. That does not mean that he will make an end of learning then, but only that henceforth he will go on learning—and continue learning for the rest of his life—in relation not to the “subjects” of a curriculum, but to the realities he is attacking.

We are parting from the old delusion that learning is a mere phase in life. And all the antiquated nonsense of calling people bachelors and masters and doctors of arts and science might very well go, with the gowns and hoods that recall some medieval alchemist or inquisitor, to limbo. They mean nothing. There is no presumption that a man who has the diploma, or whatever they call it, of M. A., is even a moderately educated man.

One may argue that to clear out the colleges and

disperse the crowds of spoiled and motiveless youth that now, under a pretense of some high and conclusive educational benefit, constitute the physical bulk of Oxford, Cambridge, Yale and Harvard, is not to put an end to universities; but the value of that argument depends upon the meaning we assign to the word university.

No doubt the modern world requires an increasing number of institutions conducting research, gathering and presenting knowledge, affording opportunities for discussions and decisions between interested men, working perpetually upon the perpetually renewed myriads of interrogations with which the intelligent adult faces existence; but are such institutions, without teaching pretensions, really universities in the commonly accepted sense of the word?

A whole book might be written about the varying uses of that word. In one sense the Royal Society of London might be called a university, but it seems to me that in ordinary speech "university" conjures up first and foremost a vision of undergraduates engaged in graduation, a scene of caps and gowns, brightly colored hoods and scarlet robes, of learned doctors who are supposed to have imparted their precious accumulations to the receptive youth at their feet, and of candidates, shaken and examined when full, certified to "know all that there is to be knowed" and sent into the world, in need of no further intellectual process for the rest of their lives except perhaps a little calking.

There is the current idea of a university, embalming the artless assumptions of an age that passes. It seems to me that age may very well take its universities with it—into history.

The newer institutions, the research and post-graduate colleges if you cling to the word, will offer no general education at all, no graduation in arts or science or wisdom. The only students who will come to them will be young people who are specially attracted and who want to work in close relation as assistants, secretaries, special pupils, collateral investigators with the devoted and distinguished men whose results are teaching all the world.

These men will teach when they feel disposed to teach. They will write, they will communicate what they have to say by means of conferences and special demonstrations, and their utterances will be world-wide. There is no need whatever now for anyone ever to suffer and inflict an ordinary course of lectures again.

The new institutions for the increase of knowledge will become the constituent ganglia of one single world university and a special press and a literature of explanation and summary will make the general consequences of their activities accessible everywhere.

The modern university, as Carlyle said long ago, is a university of books. So far as general education is concerned I agree entirely with that.

There it is that we to whom power is happening are still most negligent. It is not merely that we have great possibilities of endowment; we have also great opportunities of organization.

As the prestige of tradition and traditional institutions fades, an immense desire for knowledge and for new sustaining ideas spreads through the world. There are millions of people, half educated and un-

educated, vividly aware that they are ill-informed and undirected, passionately eager to learn and to acquire a sense of purpose and validity.

This new demand for information, for suggestion and inspiration, is perceptible now not only in the Atlantic communities but increasingly in India, in China, in Russia and in the Near East. We make no concerted effort to cope with it. We allow it to be exploited meanly for immediate profits.

Much absolute rubbish is fed to this great hunger, and still more adulterated food. This appetite, which should grow with what it feeds on, is thwarted and perverted.

It rests with us, the people with capital and enterprise, to treat this phase of opportunity with a better respect, to show a larger generosity in the promotion and distribution of publications, to use the great new possibilities of intellectual dissemination that arise worthily and fruitfully.

The world university must be a great literature. We cannot have our able teachers wasting and wearying their voices any longer in the lecture theaters of provincial towns; we want them to speak to all the world.

And it must be a literature made accessible by translation into every prevalent language. Each language and people will still produce its own literature, expressive of its own esthetic spirit and developing its own distinctive possibilities, but the literature of ideas must be a world-wide literature sustaining one world-wide civilization.

To this sustaining contemporary literature in its variety and abundance our young people of all

classes must go for their general conception of life, and throughout all their subsequent lives they will follow it and react to it and develop mentally in relation to it. Such upper personal teaching as will remain in the world, will direct their attention to what is being written and said, and will advise and assist in study and selection.

That in effect is the real upper education of today; that is how we are being kept alive as a thinking community now.

Apart from the modicum of technical instruction they impart, the upper schools and universities of our world already betray themselves for an imposture, rather delaying, wasting and misleading good intentions, rather using their great prestige and influence in sustaining prejudice in favor of outworn institutions and traditions that endanger and dwarf human life, than in any real sense educating.

They are the most powerful bulwarks, necessarily and inseparably a part—the most vital and combative part—of that declining order which our revolution seeks to replace from the foundations upward.

Here as with monarchy and militant nationalism we do not need so much to attack as to disregard and neglect, to supersede and efface, through the steadfast development of a new world-wide organism of education and interchange, press, books, encyclopedias, organized translations, conferences, research institutions.

A time must come when Oxford and Cambridge, Yale and Harvard will signify no more in the current intellectual life of the world than the monas-

tery of Mount Athos or the lamaseries of Tibet do now, when their colleges will stand empty and clean for the amateur of architecture and the sightseeing tourist.

WHEN I SOWED MY WILD OATS

By George Ade

ONE of our modern developments always gives me the trembles. Even though I have been a trustee of Purdue and honored by medals and degrees, and was head man of our Greek-letter society for two years, and have been given friendly welcome on many an imposing campus, I cannot get over being frightened by the huge and pretentious universities of these newer days. The reason is that I am bound to contrast the metropolitan splendor and the spectacular incidentals of such schools as Yale, Michigan, Illinois and California with the timid provincialism and the pathetic primitiveness of college life as I knew it at LaFayette, Indiana, during the 'eighties.

When I see fraternity houses which look like castles on the Rhine, and hear 70,000 football rooters bellowing at one time and watch a parading band which has as many members as we had undergraduates, and learn that the building program for next year involves a budget of only a few *millions*, then I think of the scattered brick buildings at the summit of Chauncey Hill and the lights winking in the cubical dormitory, and the straggling parade to the dining-hall and the endless milling of those terrified country boys and girls from one recitation hall to another. All of it seems most aboriginal.

Our much esteemed alma mater was a wobbly

experiment when I walked up the gravel path toward the Main Building of Purque one day in early September, 1883. I was fifty miles from home and felt fifty thousand. My low soft hat had a band of watered silk and a buckle on the side. With those details in mind you can supply the remainder of the wardrobe, the same as Roy Chapman Andrews can build up a dinosaur if he finds a leg bone.

Four years later I was giving a one-man parade in a regalia which included a single-breasted "Prince Albert" (a most futile attempt at sartorial elegance), intimate trousers and a tall silk hat with an insufficient brim. The so-called "plug hat" and a bold mustache shaped like Cupid's bow were considered the ultimate in senior stylishness. Facial adornments refused to sprout for me but I acquired all the other marks of upper-class distinction.

We believed that we were collegians and we tried to keep alive a few "traditions," even though the school was only ten years old when I took my degree and the student body could have been and was assembled into a chapel which was only a niche between two walls.

Most of the undergraduates who came in from the short timber and the tall grass were housed in the "dorm." Our living apartments were of monastic simplicity and all the gaieties of college life were regulated by a total absence of superfluous currency. Board was \$2.50 per week. Already I have told how we managed to revel in theatricals and food at an average layout of about forty-five cents a night.

Let me tell you what we *didn't* have. No frater-

nity or club houses. No Athletic Association and no teams of any kind playing intercollegiate schedules. No glee-club. No dramatic club. No band. No daily paper—just a puny magazine that came out once a month. No annual book until 1889 when John McCutcheon nagged his class into getting out the first “Débris.” No stadium, no ceremonies, no dress parades. Maybe I can indicate a synopsis of our absolute yappiness by telling you that in the whole dormitory the only suit of evening clothes was owned by Shrewsbury Beauregard Miller of Charleston, West Virginia, and when he arrayed himself and started for the city to attend a “hop” we of the submerged class would lean out of our windows and hoot at him.

Although we were still in the Stone Age we thought we were the ultimate in sophistication. When it came to hiring a band-wagon and riding out to a picnic on the banks of the Wabash or the Wild Cat and then riding home in the moonlight, singing “Upidee,” could anything, I ask you, have been more devilish and carefree and varsity?

The old-fashioned literary societies gave us our only excuse for factional line-ups. I was a member of the Irving Literary Society, named in honor of Washington Irving. Most of our members lived in the dormitory and were still close to the soil and proud of their uncivilization. Our hated rival, the Carlyle Literary Society, christened by someone who had happened to hear about Thomas Carlyle, held forth on the top floor of the opposite end of the Main Building. Most of the Carlyles were dudes who lived in LaFayette and wore scarf-pins. Gosh, how we detested them!

Probably it was no misfortune that I attended a small college where every student was known and sized up and rated by his associates. The "literary society," which we took so seriously and which gave us an excuse for reciting and debating every Friday evening, was, I slyly suspect, just as good training as the boys are now getting out of their participation in house-parties and musical comedies.

I do know that many of the lads who camped out in that dismal old dormitory and pegged away at the nebulous curriculum have been useful and distinguished citizens through the years which have elapsed since we visited from room to room wearing very few, if any, clothes.

Honestly, I couldn't begin to make you understand the ghastly raw conditions which prevailed in a freshwater college forty years ago. When I set myself to write this piece for Ray Long I went to a trunk in the attic and dug out of the archives a dusty mess of reminders of my so-called "happy days" in school.

Coming right down to it, they were not any too happy. To begin with, I was a dependent and I had a well-founded suspicion that most of the relatives and all of my father's friends and business associates regarded me as a risky experiment—which I was. According to Newton County standards I was bleeding my father white in order to live a life of reckless luxury, but my rating in college was that of a second-rate pauper. All during the period in which I was living on my indulgent but indigent parents I was possessed of unsatisfied yearnings. I permitted myself to dream of a day when I would come back to LaFayette owning several suits of

clothes and put up at the Lahr House and drive all around town and out to the Wea Plains in shiny livery rigs.

I think that my first days of self-respecting happiness came long after I had escaped from college and when I found it possible to do something for those few who had been, in the language of Bill Nye, "good to me when it didn't look as if it would pay."

But I must not forget the King Tut documents which I have dug up from the tombs of the past and which are strewn about the table in front of me, even as I write. I think I am doubly intrigued (we never heard of *that* word in the 'eighties!) by discovering an accurate catalog of my private library. As I read over the list of books which I had selected for my private inspiration forty years ago I have a sudden thrill and an almost-belief that I anticipated Doctor Eliot. Only I didn't use up five feet. Also, I acknowledge a degree of shame when I look at the reading table beyond and see fiction so light that the volumes have to be weighted down with vagrant atlases and dictionaries, lest a breeze should blow them away.

I don't know whether, as a junior, I was really high-brow or merely letting on to be but I am fairly proud of my library of 1886. Also, I am wondering what became of it, because I cannot find on my shelves today one volume of that meager but aristocratic collection which included Gibbon's "The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," Ridpath's "United States," Rollin's "Ancient History," Pollard's "History of the Confederacy," "Lincoln's Administration" by Raymond, "Development of

English Literature and Language" by Welsh, Lectures by Horace Mann, Creasy's Decisive Battles, "Short History of the English People" by Green, Schiller's "Thirty Years' War," Works of Shakespeare, Taine's "English Literature," "Political Economy" by John Stuart Mill, Emerson's Essays, "Bleak House" by Dickens, one volume of Goldsmith, Baker's "Natural Philosophy," "Footprints of the Creator" by Hugh Miller, Sheridan's Plays, "Gulliver's Travels," Byron, Sir John Mandeville, Swift, Henry George, Pope, Sir Walter Scott, Burns, Thackeray—and so on and so on, with no trash in sight.

Here are some "literary" programs and flexible scratch-books proving that, even as a vealy undergraduate, I could write essays and deliver orations on such ponderous topics as "Education by Contact," "Leaders," "The Abolitionist as a Type," "Popular Fallacies" and "The Future of Letters in the West." The last one in the list was my Commencement Day effort and I spent weeks on it, rubbing out short words and putting in longer ones. I have the originals of all the other masterpieces but I cannot find a copy of that tremolo dissertation in which I predicted that the hub of the literary universe was about to shift from Cambridge, Massachusetts, to an indefinite region which included Crawfordsville, Indianapolis and Tippecanoe County. I wish I could find that speech because, at present, I know absolutely nothing about the future of letters in the West and I am a little shaky regarding both the present and the past, but in June, 1887, I was in possession of all needed facts and qualified to do some very cocksure horoscoping.

I am tempted to quote liberally from these efforts which I vocalized with so much grim seriousness there on the old chapel platform. Certainly my showing as a literary "performer" in college was a most dignified prelude to a dissolute and undignified career as a dealer in the vernacular.

The tempter got after me and I fell. It is just as Glen MacDonough said one night at the Lambs' Club. Several of us who believed that we were prostituting our God-given talents in order to collect fat royalty checks were bemoaning our unhappy lots, even as we were spending freely the wages of our shame. Glen remarked that anyone who stayed in the writing game long enough would finally sink so low that he would sit at a window in a flowered dressing-gown and whistle at passers-by.

Heigh-ho! Here are queer-looking invites to the sophomore picnic, and my own calling-card, handwritten with the fraternity badge in the corner! Also a formal notice from the President that I will not be a regular junior until I make up my third term conditions in zoology and physics. Many moldy play-bills of the old Grand Opera House. Little did I suspect, as I watched Frank Lane play Crassus in support of Robert Downing in "Spartacus, the Gladiator," that ten years later we would be bosom friends.

The dance-cards still wear the faded ribbons. Here is a reminder of that big party we had at Tecumseh's Trail, up the Wabash. The first dance was a quadrille and my partner was Mary Swearingen. I waltzed Number 2 with Retta Johnson. Then I had a polka with Mrs. George Mueller, who had been Nell Floyd. After that came a quadrille

and my partner was Mary Royse. Immediately afterward I had a waltz with Lillian Howard, followed by the lancers, this time giving Nell Mueller a chance to admire me for a second time.

It seems that I skipped both the schottische and the Newport and then I came back strong, reveling in a succession of quadrilles, "Old Dan Tucker," two waltzes, Virginia reel and a couple of polkas, my partners being Mabel Vinton, Lucy Blanchard, Fannie Murray, Anna Baker, Mrs. Mueller again—also a "Georgia B" and a "Miss Watkins" whom I cannot quite identify.

To the present generation of gyrating jazzers that funny-looking card with the Gothic print is just as antique as the Colosseum at Rome.

Photographs—many of them. J. B. Burris, Ben Taylor, Clarence Bivins, Charley Stafford, Elwood Mead and George McCoy—each with the kind of mustache I wanted but couldn't get.

John McCutcheon and Bob Jacques look real comical with their clothes put on wrong-side-to so that when they faced the camera their four-in-hands draped their spinal columns. John was always thinking up something killing like that. A genuine wag!

Here is a priceless record of a picnic in Happy Hollow with John wearing a plug hat. And one of a "private theatricals" group with John wearing another kind of tall hat—also colored spectacles.

Maybe we weren't rollicking when we wore silk hats and quadrilled but we thought we were, because we hadn't learned that it was possible to live in a fraternity house and employ Chicago orchestras.

THE RIGHT HONORABLE THE STRAWBERRIES

By Owen Wister

AS I look back at his adventure among us, I can count on the fingers of one hand the occasions when his path crossed mine; between whiles, long stretches of it go out of sight—into what windings of darkness not one of the old lot at Drybone has ever known to a certainty. Some of those cow-punchers were with me that first morning when he appeared out of the void. I was new to the country, still a butt for their freaks, still credulous and amazed and curious; and that morning they were showing me the graveyard. Thirty years of frontier history could be read there at a glance, and no green leaf or flower or blade of grass grew in the place.

"May my tomb be near something cheerful!" I exclaimed.

"They don't mind," said Chalkeye.

"Their mothers would," said I.

"Not the kind of mothers most of 'em probably had."

I walked off among the hollows and mounds of sand, over the sage-brush shorn by the wind. On that lone hill were headboards upright, and rotted headboards fallen on their faces. Drybone, the living town, itself already half skeleton, lay off a little way, down on the river bank. The bright sun was heating the undulated miles, which melted in more undulations to the verge of sight, and the slow warm air was strong with the spice of the

sage-brush. The river below flowed soundlessly through the silence of the land.

They rode with me as I walked and paused to copy here and there some epitaph of a soldier when Drybone had been Fort Drybone, or of a civilian of the later day when the fort had been abandoned. Killed, most of them; few women there; one quite recent, buried at the end of a dance, where she had swallowed laudanum—so they were telling me, when they stopped to look off, down the river.

Somebody on a horse.

"Give me your glasses," said Chalkeye.

Everybody took a turn through them, while the object approached.

Chalkeye passed my glasses back to me, remarking, "He'll make you look like an old-timer."

I took my turn, and knew what he was at once.

"He's English," I told them.

He now noticed us, and began to trot.

"Hold him on, somebody!" cried Chalkeye.

"No need," said I. "That's not the first horse he has ridden."

"He's bouncing like you done at first," said Post Hole Jack.

They mentioned derisively his boots, his coat, his breeches, his hat. A shotgun gleamed across his saddle, from which some sage-chickens dangled. He had now turned off the stage road and was coming up the hill. He looked as tired as his horse. He was shaven clean and began to smile as we watched him nearing in silence.

"Made in Eton & Oxford—recently," I decided.

I saw that the sun had burned him unsparingly,

that his eyes were blue and merry, his hair a sunny yellow; his smile was confiding and direct, and boyhood shone in his face—but boyhood that already knew its way about in life.

"I beg your pardon," he inquired in the light intonations of Mayfair. "I was looking for a place called Drybone. I was rather expecting to put up there. A place called Drybone."

"You've found it," said Chalkeye.

He turned to the cow-puncher with lifted brows. "I beg your pardon?"

"I said you'd found it," responded Chalkeye. "Drybone's right here."

"Oh, really? Oh, thanks!" He glanced at the graves inquiringly, and hesitated. "Oh. Really." He leaned to read the headboard I had been copying. "'Sacred to the memory of'—but there's more of the place than this, I hope?"

"A little more," said Chalkeye.

"Because they told me I could put up there"—again he glanced at the graves—"and one isn't quite ready."

"Ready?" repeated Chalkeye.

"To meet one's Maker and all that."

At these words, all in the light intonation of Mayfair, a unified, fascinated silence settled on the cow-punchers, and out of this spoke one hoarse whisper:

"What'd he say?"

"Because," the Englishman resumed with his confiding smile, "they do tell one things here. And the things are frightfully absorbing, but they're not always wholly accurate. So one can absolutely put up here without recourse to Abraham's bosom?"

"There's a hotel," I said. "I'm at it. Not ten minutes off."

At my voice he turned quickly. "Only ten minutes? How very jolly! I say, when did you arrive?"

The audience grinned; in spite of my sombrero and spurs and chaps, it was plain to him that I had arrived lately.

"This summer," I admitted with annoyance.

"But you're not English?"

"I'm from Philadelphia."

"I saw the place. Liberty Bell. I say, I could do with a bath. Five mornings now—by Jove, it's six!—with tin basins that were no better than they should be. And every jolly old towel had been trailed in ignominy. And I'm starving for a dreamless sleep. What do you do about the bugs? Well, thanks so very much."

He took the road, but not alone; escorting him trotted a hypnotized company, hanging speechless on his words.

"These," he said to me, touching the sage-chickens. "They vaguely suggest grouse. Edible? Hallo, there go some more running along!"

He was down, the reins flung over his horse's head, his gun ready.

Two birds rose and fell right and left, and he raced gleefully to pick them up. The cow-punchers looked at each other and again fixed their eyes on him.

"I say!" he cried, swinging into the saddle, "what lots of game! Do you produce dogs? I must manage to have a dog. Are these birds edible?"

"Those young ones," said Chalkeye. "That old one would taste strong. Better draw them now."

"Draw? Now what's that?"

"I'll show you."

"Now is this going to be one of the things they tell you?"

Chalkeye laughed joyously.

"Lying is sweeter than sin to me," he declared, "but Tuesdays I swear off." He slit the birds open and cleaned them.

"Oh, I say!" exclaimed the Englishman. "You do a neat job."

"You'll do it next time," said Chalkeye, visibly flattered. "Your stirrups are too short, but you take your saddle-horn correct. Who learned you about dropping the reins?"

"That? Oh, the consequences of not. They had warned me, but I didn't think. And so there one was."

"Where was one?"

At this note of satire, the youth's eye gave a responsive flicker. "Well, in point of fact, not anywhere at all. There's such a lot of your extraordinary country that's not anywhere at all. And so I walked, and walked, and the horse led one on and on, just out of reach, and the sun was setting, and I felt like such a silly ass. Finally some admirable people appeared above the horizon, and one was tremendously obliged to them. Of course one hasn't mastered your language yet." And the eye flickered again.

"Can you rope?" asked Chalkeye.

"Not yet. Ah, that's quite a game, isn't it!"

"I'll learn you."

"Will you really? Oh, thanks. You'll find I'm a dismal duffer at it. There's been so little chance. Only last week I was in the Pullman. That's a ghastly vehicle. A mere curtain between the world and one's true self. No country but a singularly chaste one—I'm told yours is exorbitantly chaste—would tolerate adjacent dishabille like that among the sexes. They told me Drybone would be a likely spot for seein' a bit of everything. I mean to say, of everything characteristic. I intend to believe faithfully all the things they tell me. It encourages them to tell more—and that is so very apt to be characteristic. Look how the sun has cooked my absurd countenance! I must absolutely procure a hat at once—a sensible hat like yours, I mean. Does Drybone contain hats?"

Chatting along as it came into his head, he was unaware of the town till he was in it, noticed it suddenly, and stopped. "I say!" And he stared eagerly.

"Is it characteristic enough for you?" I inquired.

He eyed the mangy parade-ground; he took in the silent barracks, the desertion, the desolation, the naked flagpole, the broken windows. New life had adopted many of the old shells. Outlaws of both sexes were snugly housed here to welcome customers. He listened while Chalkeye pointed out the principal objects of interest—the store, the hotel, the post- and stage-office, the several dens of the assorted industries. He listened, and his blue eyes shone like a child's at a fairy-tale.

"Simply rippin'," he murmured.

From the undulated miles that engirt us, a warm

slow wind brought the fragrance of the sage-brush, wild and clean among the shells of Drybone.

He sniffed it. "Good smell, that! Bucks one up." For a moment more he contemplated the town, stark in the sunlight, and dumb in its noon-tide torpor. The twinkle waked again in his eye. "From your engaging statistics," he said to Chalk-eye, "I gather that among the articles of household furniture here, one mustn't count on meeting the cradle in any abundance?"

The eye of the cow-puncher sparkled an instant in response; then he replied dispassionately: "They claim there used to be a few. But the population always kept even, because whenever a child was born, some man left town."

The Englishman stared in perplexity.

"Now what's that?" And he thought hard over it. "Oh!" he cried, "I take you. Yes. A sweeping denunciation of the local morals!"

On our way across to the hotel, he was sunk in meditation, but twice muttered to himself, "Simply imperishable." He dismounted absent-mindedly, absent-mindedly wrote his name in the greasy and inky hotel book, and absent-mindedly followed up the stairs the gambler who kept the establishment. From his room door he called down, "Remember, you're going to teach me how to rope."

"You bet I will!" Chalkeye called up to him. With that was sown the seed of their fateful relation.

The punchers' heads were bending over the hotel book, studying his name.

"Give me a whole day," said one, "and I couldn't learn it by heart."

"It's good for a job at the Hat Six," said the Doughgy.

"Why the Hat Six?" I inquired.

"Not a man there goes by his real name this summer."

Chalkeye ran his finger slowly beneath the new arrival's writing.

"Measure that," he ordered.

"Measure it?"

"Did you figure," demanded Chalkeye witheringly, "that any human—don't care if he is an English lord—would invent half a foot of name for daily use? It was his folks. They done that to him at baptism when he was too young to state his objections."

But the Doughgy stuck to his doubts. "If he's a lord, why does he quit his baronial castle?"

"Maybe its roof's leakin'," said Post Hole Jack.

"Maybe he's lost it at cards," suggested Hard Winter Hance. "Lords do that."

"And maybe he's just having a look at life like the rest of us," said Chalkeye contemptuously. "What are his reasons to me?"

"He's got 'em, all right," the Doughgy insisted. "You bet. Well, the Hat Six will go without letters till next mail day—I can't wait for that stage any longer." His spurs scraped jingling across the porch, he swung on his horse and was gone. They followed.

The sound of their galloping died away, their dust paled and vanished in the distance, and I loitered in the noon sun and the torpor, waiting dinner and aware of the pervading sage-brush. Who was right? I had never seen Chalkeye take to a

stranger so quickly. The Doughgy could hardly know that the startling freedom of speech in Englishmen—freedom where the American is silent—freedom as to their incomes, their families, their gaieties—can go with a fathomless reticence, deep beyond our unversed technique. The American with something behind his scenes generally lets it show through his cracks; a consummate product like this blossom of aristocracy can seem wide open yet be tight shut.

Still, he was young, he must be very young; surely too young to have something behind the scenes already! But a beautiful, consummate product, a thousand years in the making.

“Say.”

The voice came from the hotel porch; it was the landlord-gambler.

“Dinner?” I responded.

“Madden’s looking after that, I guess.”

His hotel was little to him, save to house and detain the traveler who passed—and stopped to play cards. Here often sat the big cattlemen until their thousands were gone, while lesser citizens dropped their hundreds, and the cow-puncher what his pocket still held after he had paid his visits to the women.

“Say,” the landlord repeated. “That friend of yours ain’t the love’s young dream he looks.”

Could the Doughgy be right? “Has he dealt you a hand already?” I laughed.

“No,” said the landlord reflectively. “No, he didn’t deal me any hand. At the rate he was goin’ to bed, I guess he’s asleep by now.” Further meditation led to further remarks. “He mentioned he

was expectin' his baggage by the stage. I said in that case I'd like a cash deposit. 'How much?' he said. 'Twenty-five dollars,' I said. 'Right oh!' was the words he used, and out comes his money. He's got plenty. He knowed it was a week's board and he asked for a receipt. Well, he got it off me, I was that amazed. There's no correspondence at all between his kiss-me-good-night-mother face and his adult actions.

"Hot water's what he wanted next, and clean sheets. He's between them sheets now. First time I ever done such a thing. Must have been his language. Kind of stunned me. 'Double or quits,' says he when I come back with the hot water and found him half naked already. You'd ought to see his fancy underwear. 'Ain't you eatin' dinner?' I said, and he says, 'I'll eat it the day after tomorrow. Don't let them break my dreamless sleep!' Who's your friend?"

"I've not made his acquaintance yet."

"H'm. D'you figure he's wanted where he's known?"

"More likely he's *not* wanted where he's known."

"H'm. D'you figure it's some other feller's wife?"

"They'd draw the line at her, not at him."

"Don't they draw the line for lords anywheres?"

"Oh, yes!"

While the landlord was hearing my account of where they did draw the line, a shrill Mongolian voice cried from somewhere indoors:

"Dinnes leddy!"

It was Madden, sole servant of the hotel, cook,

waiter, room sweeper, bed maker, who after the day's work lost his wages regularly and incurably at every game he tried in the den.

Still the landlord stood on his porch thinking. "Say. That kid's folks raised him wrong. If they'd exposed him to the weather some, he might have been a credit to them."

"You've not mentioned what came of double or quits," I remarked.

"Ain't I? Oh, well—I don't grudge it to him. He's got his twenty-five back, and twenty-five of mine, and my receipt for a week's board."

"God bless my soul!"

"Oh, it won't be let stay with him long. When we started in to match, I said I'd take a look at his coin. He looked at me. 'Certainly,' he says, with six inches of ice on his voice; and his face got redder than his sunburn. Nothin' was wrong with the coin. 'And now,' he says, takin' another look at me, 'I'll not ask to see yours.' Funny how he made those harmless words sound, but say, how can you hit a person that's only got his underwear on? He's an adult, all right. Oh, it'll be won back off him. I guess he'll not require to be called. The cockroaches will look him up this evenin'."

I wondered a little at his way of putting it—"It'll be won." Why not say right out, "I'll win it"? If you're a professional gambler, why be sensitive?

"Dinnes leddy!" again shrieked the odd Mongolian voice.

"All right, Madden," called the landlord. "But if your friend stays among us, this lonesome country will not miss the circus to speak of."

Madden on certain nights scattered in his kitchen a powder which drove up into the bedroom above it swarms of those rushing insects that haunt sinks. When this occurred, nobody could remain long in a dreamless sleep. We should have our first circus in a few hours. To think of this cheered me throughout dinner in spite of my sullen neighbor, whose very silence was disagreeable. He was a gambler from Powder River, and he too used to win the poor Chinaman's wages. Madden's hand shook as he served him.

Yes, it was my turn to see, instead of to be, the circus. Entertainment for this lonesome country would now be furnished by another—unless he should modify himself, which Englishmen seldom do; they merely wonder why you don't. Why was he here, remote from the feudal centuries which had produced him so flawless, with his confiding smile, his wary wits, his merry blue eye, his poise, his flaxen hair, his leap at the sight of a bird to shoot, that flash of skill with a gun which there and then had won the heart of Chalkeye in spite of any outlandish fashion in speech or dress? Flawless? Or was there a flaw at which they had drawn the line? I hoped that the Doughgy was wrong—and I looked forward to the circus.

After supper, when the night's gambling had begun, my suspense increased. I played poker for a while, as usual a loser, and the man from Powder River did not grow more agreeable over the cards. I had a sense of something in the wind outside my understanding. I left the game and sat in the office by the big table, idly reading the stale newspapers strewn upon it, waiting for the cockroaches.

At length a very marked disturbance was set up above, and to my delight I heard a voice say clearly: "Why, damn it, look at that! Oh, I say, just look at that!"

The Englishman came down-stairs. He was barefoot, clad scantily in a garment or two, with the bedquilt clutched round him. He came without haste, candid, cheerful, self-possessed beneath his rumpled tangle of yellow hair.

"Oh, there you are! No ladies present, I hope? One couldn't stop up there, you know. Myriads of active creatures streaking and twinkling. A creature got in my ear and banished sleep, and I felt others hastening over me; so I lighted a lamp, and saw them rushing. Walls—pillow—myriads—they ran out of my trousers and into my boots. One positively can't stop up there."

"I couldn't," I told him; at which his blue eyes fixed me with sudden attention. "I didn't," I pursued. "I slept on this table."

"Oh. Really. Oh. Yes. One of those characteristic things! Well, it's a peerless success. But I hope that whatever others are in store will be more subtle. Where's the landlord? Would he mind if I slept on the table?" He went to the open door of the saloon. "Landlord, it's a peerless success. Would you mind if I slept on the table?"

"Sleep where it suits you, kid. But now you're awake, what's the matter with a little poker?"

"Oh, thanks so very much, no, I'm too much of a kid, if you don't mind. I'll just coil up here."

The special vibrations in his utterance of "kid" went home to the ears of the gamblers, a light sound of laughter at the landlord's expense rose and died.

In his quilt, the barefoot boy stood motionless, watching the dingy, dangerous group at their game. His hair and his slim, erect form were touched by the light of a lamp near him; a high lamp in the saloon shone down upon the players and their cards. Other lamps struck gleams from the thick glasses along the bar, gleams from the bottles stacked above it, and the pictures of pink women and prize-fighters flanking the bottles made patches of light on the wall. Big hats hung on nails, and their owners sat at various tables in boots and spurs and flannel shirts and leather chaps, their heads unbrushed, their necks dark and seamed, their hands knotted, scarred, their pistols visible.

He hung so long upon the scene that I thought he might be going to change his mind and join them in the name of the characteristic, but in time he turned away. Was it some trick of light and shadow? His face seemed to look as it might when he should be fifty; not because of any wrinkles, but from whatever spiritual demolition it is that age sometimes wreaks on the human countenance. It must have been a trick of the lamp; as he came forward, he was merely the serene boy that had stalked down from the cockroaches fifteen minutes ago; and with his words, his confiding smile shone out again.

"I say! Simply rippin'! John Sargent ought to paint your friends. It would make a pair with his Spanish den of melody and sudden death one saw in Paris. But that Chinaman should keep out of it. What chance has he got in there?"

John Sargent was not yet even a name to me, and I asked no questions as the boy went on.

"Well, now for your landlord's ample hospital-

ity on this jolly old table. I could do with a little more bedding."

He glanced alertly about the office; dragged a saddle from a corner, threw over it the saddle-blanket, stiff and odorous with sweat, and so contrived himself a pillow; he mashed and shaped the stale newspapers into a wad between his bones and the table, got up on it, and was curling himself with his back to the light when a crash in the next room, and voices of violence, and shots, brought him up sitting.

"Get down!" I said to him; and I ran out of range and crouched.

He sat on his table, gazing with an interested expression at the saloon.

"Get down! You'll be killed!" I shouted from my shelter.

He did not turn his head.

The crashes and the scuffling of boots had ceased, and only the shots rang. The duel came through the door into the office: first, the sullen man who had been at dinner, backing, aiming, firing, and so step by step to the front door. Standing a moment there, he shot, his arm swung wild and limp, he slanted backward, grabbing at the jamb, lurched and fell outward, and lay so, his boots with his spurs and long heels sticking stiffly into the room.

Gripping a peg by the door of the saloon, the landlord leaned for support, fired twice more, coughed horribly and pitched forward flat on his face as his pistol bumped a few feet across the floor. Smoke floated thick in the room, its smell bit my throat like a file, and through it I saw the boy, seated on his table still. Faces from various sides

began cautiously to peep and peer. The boy moved, got down slowly, and slowly walked to the saloon door, and slowly stooped down.

"He's dead," I heard him say, almost under his breath; and I found that I was still crouching in my corner. I rose, and he noticed me. "So they meant it," he said quietly.

The peeping faces had now made sure that this affair was over, and the emptied premises were crowded for a while with neighbors who had left whatever they were doing to gather details of the incident. So it was those two! Then what was behind it? A split between partners? Or had it come up over the landlord's woman? Well, others were ready to fill the vacant situation. Maybe she'd take Jack Saunders now. Well, neither party would be missed.

And amid such dispassionate comment, both parties were lifted and carried somewhere, while Madden appeared with a bucket, and after splashing hot water on the floor, went on his knees to scrub it with true Chinese diligence. Before he was done, all neighbors had gone back to their own business, and there were the boy and I alone in the office. Neither of us had spoken while the crowd was talking, and none had spoken to us, or noticed us particularly.

"Do they always take this sort of thing as a matter of course?" he now inquired.

"I suppose so. It's my first experience."

"I say. When you told me to hook it, you know. I believed everybody was ragging for my special edification."

I smiled, and he smiled a little, too.

"I say. What would be your idea as to a good big drink?"

"So be it. On me."

"No, no. One isn't destitute. Come up-stairs."

There I shared his whisky, and he shared my room. Safe from cockroaches. Destitute! An odd word.

Next day the two parties went to inhabit the graveyard, and their places in Drybone were filled by the living. Sundry horsemen ambled casually into town through this forenoon on various pretexts. Every one of them was to be seen at some time stooping over the hotel register, and I wondered if the boy noticed that each, before ambling out, somehow had a word or two with him.

Tom King, foreman of the V R outfit, returned to Deer Creek, disappointed not to have identified the Englishman he had once seen at O'Neil City, Texas, dealing faro; through that day and the next, others who had met here and there similar nomads of disgrace, ambled in: the lonesome country entertained itself with no circus but with many guesses behind his back. The word he dropped out of silence the second afternoon as he smoked his pipe perhaps gave a clue to his thoughts.

"Can they always find so much spare time?"

His tone may have been a trifle lighter than common, perhaps something like a shadow was present in his eyes; I couldn't be sure, as he smoked on for a while. Destitute?

"Will Chalkeye be coming along again?" he presently asked.

"Probably for the mail, and certainly as soon as he has money to spend."

"I like Chalkeye."

He did not like the hotel, or its new proprietor gambler, Jack Saunders. This personage had exacted and promptly received a cash deposit, when the boy took steps to find a habitation of his own. He chose what remained of the old adjutant's office, out of which one good room could still be made.

"Aiming to take out naturalization papers?" Saunders inquired.

"Now there's an idea!" retorted the boy pleasantly. "To become your fellow subject one would."

"Citizens live here."

"Quite! I beg their eighty million pardons."

With narrowed eyes, Saunders stood for a moment, then went about his business, and the boy made some purchases for housekeeping.

"How do you swallow the filth they give you for coffee?" he asked me. "One could learn to cook as well as to rope. If ever my things do come, you'll see my room won't be half bad."

They came the following week, and his first mail came, many letters, forwarded to Cheyenne first and thence here, with a black-edged one among them. Passengers were in the office, bound north, and punchers had gathered for their mail. These watched him tear open the black-edged letter first, and after a glance, forget his surroundings. He seemed to read it twice, and stood then, holding it absently, and spoke, not to us, but to space.

"Well, I shall miss old John."

In the silence, some boot scraped on the floor. Perhaps they were hoping for a circus.

He read the bad news again. "Only a week. And then—gone."

Among the forgotten audience, the face of Chalk-eye penetrated his trance.

"John was such a jolly old sot," he confided to Chalkeye, as if the two were alone.

"There's some here," said the puncher awkwardly, "that could fill his place that way for you."

The boy did not seem to hear him.

"Of course, one wasn't going to see John again very soon, but—well, of course that's one life less between me and the strawberry leaves," he finished in a tone abruptly matter-of-fact.

Stupefaction deepened the noiselessness.

"Us Americans," said Jack Saunders, intentionally ungrammatical, "ain't never studied your foreign fruits. Was John climbin' the tree for them strawberries when he fell?"

A dark flush instantly spread over Chalkeye's face, while the boy looked somewhat long, but very amiably, at Saunders before he answered.

"Oh," he said in his lightest tone, and as if from a distance, "John was my brother, you see."

If this was a circus, it was not he that furnished it. The stage was ready, its passengers left for the north, most of the cow-punchers rode away, and anyone who had come in now to join the few of us that remained, could not have read in the boy's recovered aspect anything of the shock which had been for a brief space too much for him.

Chalkeye failed to suppress his customary thirst for information.

"About the strawberry leaves. Would you object to telling some more? Don't, if you do."

"Very glad to. One forgets. If you Americans only spoke a language entirely your own, it

wouldn't be so baffling. You're so absurdly like us at odd moments, and so inconceivably not at others—you've not, for instance, inherited certain ancient—suppose we say habits? Such as the eldest son. Call it a bad habit if you like, but there it is!—and you were a bit slow in getting rid of your own bad habit of slavery, weren't you? Now I'm rather fond of our ancient habits, and yet I've always been a younger son."

"But you're not now that—that—he's gone?"

"John? Oh, yes, I am." Here he turned to me and forgot the cow-punchers, speaking to me as if we were alone. "John was next above me, and such a dear fellow. We hunted pleasures in couples through the London night. Happy times! The Criterion after the theaters, and all that, you know. I couldn't carry my wine like John, but I shouldn't ever in my most careless moments ever have brought a poll to our house in Portman Square. I never saw the pater so waxy. That simply isn't done, you know. Granville's next above John. Bowls, and not bad at the wicket. Chandos is next above Granville. He got a blue. He's secretary to Lord Lyons, at our embassy in Paris. Wymford's rather political—makes speeches and all that. Of course, Wymford isn't his own father. What's the matter?" he asked, for Chalkeye had raised a pleading hand.

"We're beginners," said the puncher. "You'll have to make the strawberries easier."

"Oh. Wymford is the eldest son's title in our family. He'll drop it when he succeeds. One's parents," he continued to me, again leaving the rest out, "were absurdly prolific. If he had met us,

Wordsworth would never have stopped his poem at seven, because I'm the eleventh and last, and he could have so readily changed the meter. Wymford—his name is Charles—was the first-born. His title came into the family—but I'll skip that—he'll have the strawberry leaves when he succeeds the pater. If he were to die, my brother Ronald, the next son, would have them. I don't want to bore you," he said to the others.

"You don't. Go on, Prince."

"Not even baronet! Well. How to simplify? How to sketch? Well, it's like this."

They attended closely to his brief account of titles, coronets, emblems, the general scheme of the British peerage.

"I suppose it all sounds awfully odd to you. But it's rather natural to us."

"Is it nine," asked Post Hole Jack, "nine that's ahead of you still? Those strawberries will be ripe."

"Nine? Nine lives? But, my dear sir, one has sisters."

"Don't the girls get any?"

"Dear me, no! Fancy women in the Lords!"

"Then," pursued Post Hole Jack, "you're nothing at all?"

"Nothing but just that." And he displayed to us in turn his name on his letters. As the Doughgy looked at it, the boy looked at him with his confiding smile and said, "I fancy you may have noticed it already in the hotel register."

Triumph gleamed in the glance that Chalkeye gave the embarrassed Doughgy, who slowly mumbled the name aloud.

The boy laughed out again. "The family would never suspect you meant me if you said it like that," and he pronounced it correctly. "Of course we don't spell it so."

"What's the point?" asked Jack Saunders; and at his tone Chalkeye looked sharply at him.

"Oh," replied the boy with his voice light and distant, "no point. It's merely the right way."

"In America," said Saunders, "we tell how to say a word by its spelling."

"But do you so invariably? One's train on a Thursday morning was in a place they called O-h-i-o, and by Friday afternoon they were calling it I-o-wah. Now what have I said?" he asked me.

The general explosion which burst out immediately upon his words drowned the explanation I attempted.

"Well," he said, looking on at our mirth, "it's very pleasant to excite all this cheer. At home one never aroused so much."

The wild joy of living now seized the cow-punchers suddenly. They swung on their horses and galloped through Drybone with shouts and pistol-shots. At this disturbance, a few faces looked out to see if anything unusual was the matter, found nothing, and disappeared. Saunders walked back to his hotel, and it seemed as if a cloud had gone with him.

"An extraordinary country," said the boy to me as we watched the rushing medley of horsemen. "I like them. I like them very much. Will they come back today?"

They came back in a few minutes, soothed and

quiet, and meanwhile I had explained Ohio to him.

"Gentlemen," he said, "have one on Ohio. Is that good American?"

We were soon standing along the nearest bar.

"How!" said Post Hole Jack, and "How," said they all.

"Here's to the Right Honorable Alphabet Strawberries."

"The fall round-up is pretty near due," said Chalkeye, "and I'll be too busy to call him all that every time I want to speak to him. Here's to Strawberries."

"Now you can get a job at the Hat Six," said the Doughgy.

Well, that is the first circus he provided for the lonesome country, and that is how he got his name. Through the weeks following, it fastened upon him, and through the succeeding years he went by no other. He took no job at the Hat Six, or anywhere; at not infrequent intervals, money came to him, always spent soon, often unwisely, seldom on others; like his kind he was close with his cash, and he did not modify this or any other of his native habits. He borrowed readily, paid back casually, yet his pleasant and fearless readiness covered his shortcomings. By his extravagance he kept himself habitually behind, which did not weigh upon him heavily.

Civilized comforts and objects gradually filled his room, where hung hunting-crops, sporting trophies, with the photographs of his past; handsome folk, all with the look of his race, urbane and arrogant, men young and old, and two or three beautiful women, with their names written across

the pictures in firm round English hands. When need of money pressed him hard, he would raffle a pipe, or a scarf, or one of the civilized objects admired by Drybone and its vicinity. The lonesome country accepted him, liked him; and one there had become his sponsor and wished to be his mentor.

"Are you acquainted with many of those English aristocrats?" Chalkeye asked one day.

"With very few."

We were gathering stock through the high draws of Casper Mountain, not long before I was to go home. The leaves of the quaking aspens glorified the slopes and splashed the ridges with gold. Among them down below, the boy came for a moment into sight, looking for a white-tailed deer.

"They claim families like his were families before America was discovered," pursued Chalkeye.

"Quite a number were."

"So those dukes and lords have been seeing life for hundreds of years."

"They certainly have."

Chalkeye communed with his thoughts for a while. "He never touches a card," he presently said.

"What's your point?"

"Nothing much. Only with his other goings on, you'd think he'd enjoy that too."

"Too?"

The puncher laughed a little. "He told me lately that he was not my business."

"Said it?—just like that?"

"Said it without words. I don't want him to get into trouble with Jack Saunders."

Then I saw it in a flash; I had been quite blind to it.

"Yes," said Chalkeye, "it's her that got widowed by that last shooting at the hotel. She prefers to console herself with Strawberries. Well, in her place so would I. Jack is fifty, and washes Saturday nights, which for him is insufficient. D'you figure his folks back in England are really paying him to keep away?"

"Looks like it."

"Poor kid!" Chalkeye fell silent, ruminating. "A better bluff I've never seen."

A small bunch of cattle occupied us before he resumed.

"But now and then—well, now and then he forgets to keep it up, and a man can see he has been through something." The puncher ruminated again. "I made a little talk to Jack. I guess there's talks he has liked better, but I guess maybe he'll bear it in mind."

How deeply the gambler bore it in mind was not made clear that day, or for many days.

A shot far down below startled us unreasonably.

"Hark!" said Chalkeye.

We reined in and listened; no further sound broke upon the great stillness of the mountains.

"He has got his deer!" I declared confidently.

"He has got his deer!" repeated Chalkeye cheerfully; and we rode down to see, driving the cattle before us through the silence which our unspoken thoughts rendered needlessly ominous.

Strawberries had got his white-tailed deer with one bullet, well-placed just behind the shoulder; we had been right; it was merely this; yet that shot

has left a mark in my memory, as many a trivial event will do when it is embedded among somber recollections.

As we came near with our cattle, Strawberries was kneeling to skin and dress his game, and he glanced up at Chalkeye. In his eye I caught it then, caught what I should have missed but for that recent word of the cow-puncher's, the sort of look which an enterprising child will turn upon a restraining nurse. "He told me lately that he was none of my business." Chalkeye had expressed it perfectly.

On the trail to camp, a rain came thick and sudden upon us out of a canyon, and this furnished our cattle an excellent pretext to break and scatter. Strawberries was after them instantly.

"Let him do it by himself!" Chalkeye commanded me. "See him get his slicker on! Ain't he learning quick? I'll make a dandy puncher of him!" He watched his apt and active pupil critically. "He'd ought to have gone round them willows the other side. Well, what d'you know about that! Did you notice the way he headed that Goose Egg heifer off at the creek?"

Certainly it was all neatly and swiftly done; a better job than any of my attempts, in spite of my three-months' start; and the remark of the late landlord's came to me as he stood on his porch that first morning and reflected on the boy's parents. "If they'd exposed him to the weather some," said he, "he might have been a credit to them."

That had been merely one instance of how this flaxen-haired aristocrat could disarm the cattle-country's rooted distrust of his kind without lift-

ing a finger, without even noticing it; and without the visible lift of a finger he had beckoned to him the late landlord's woman. So much better to have done without her, to have let Jack Saunders have her!

He was now in front of us, driving the collected cattle along the wet trail. The cloud of storm and thunder had gone prowling along the farther hills, the sage-brush gave forth its sharpened pungency to the sky, and the boy, as he passed an Indian paint-brush flaming by the trail, swung down and snapped its blossom off in his hand.

"He might be one of us," said Chalkeye.

"Never," I said to myself. How should Chalk-eye, or any of them, discern the line which Strawberries drew between himself and their equality? Or understand that the true aristocrat always is the best democrat, because he is at his ease with everybody, and makes them so with him?

"Only maybe," continued the puncher, to my surprise, "he can't forget his raising."

Perhaps Strawberries seemed more nearly to forget his raising one early morning soon after this than at any other time I can recall. It was at breakfast in the next camp to which we moved, while he was in the act of learning from the cook how to toss flapjacks. Watching the performance sat various cow-punchers in a circle, and Chalkeye as he passed by stopped and gave vent to a prolonged, joyous and vibrating shout.

Strawberries paused with his ladle in mid-air. "Now why exactly do you do that?" he inquired.

"Can't seem to help it," responded the cow-puncher. "It's just my feelings. When I look at

that"—he swept his arm toward the splendid plains and the hills glowing in the sun—"well, I want to swallow it, and I want to jump on a horse and dive into it." He drew in a huge breath and became lyric. "It makes a man feel like he could live the whole of himself at once. I'd like to have ten fights, and ten girls, and ten drinks, and I'd come pretty near enjoying sudden death."

"So would I!" exclaimed the boy; and he sprang to his feet. "Let's all howl together! Now!" and he waved his ladle. "One, two, three!"

All of us had jumped up, and in unison we gave forth the full power of our lungs in that crystal air that was like creation's first light. Three hawks sailed out of some pines above, several cattle stampeded below in the sage-brush, the team tried to run away with the wagon, and two or three punchers who were throwing the herd off the bed-ground came galloping in.

And yet Strawberries, when bored or displeased, could withdraw his voice to a great distance. He withdrew it after we had reached Drybone, and with a chill that made the shrewdness of Chalkeye's doubt as to his being able to forget his raising very marked indeed. As we rode to the post-office, all the dark causes of what was to happen in its due season were present and visible: lust of the flesh, a bully's vindictiveness, human frailty, and protecting friendship.

The widow was standing at a door, and she exchanged a glance of understanding with her preferred lover, who had been absent for many days; Saunders was coming along with a saddled horse at which I noticed Chalkeye was staring. Here

were all the causes, needing only the right chance to get them in motion. It took its time to arrive, and on this particular occasion the lonesome country was merely provided with another circus.

The horse was for sale. Strawberries had owned two horses for some time, but he had been looking for a third, with a view to training him to jump. He thought that the neighborhood afforded opportunities for arranging a steeplechase course with but small effort. Steeplechasing would be a desirable addition to the country's pleasures. Here, in the opinion of Saunders, was just the animal for Strawberries, and a bargain.

"Then he can jump?" the boy inquired.

"He can jump, all right," drawled the gambler, which set a bystander laughing.

Neither Strawberries nor I had been long enough in the country to interpret this laughter. And yet—something was in the air, at least, so it seems in the strange afterglow of retrospect.

Strawberries looked the horse over with a practised eye.

"I'll get on him."

"Don't get on him," said a peremptory voice.

At this, everybody stared. It was Chalkeye who had spoken out thus, unwarrantably. He got a very ugly look from Saunders, but from Strawberries he received the perfection of disdain.

"I beg your pardon. Did you speak?" That was when his voice came from extreme remoteness.

"I said not to get on that horse."

If Strawberries had been fully determined not to get on, naturally this would have been more than enough to make him change his mind. He dis-

mounted from his own horse with careful deliberation and walked to the bony animal that Saunders held, a roan with a Roman nose and a watching eye.

"Take your medicine, then," muttered Chalkeye gruffly.

Then I guessed what the matter was, and knew that this was the horse that went by the name of Calamity.

It was quite admirable to see how the boy sat the bucking beast after Saunders had let him go. I should have been flung off in a moment. The struggle began amid expectant silence, the ancient instinct with which Rome watched the gladiator; but when the boy's pluck and skill had held out longer than their expectation, voices broke out here and there calling instructions to him.

The horse went through his list of contortions. Arching his back like a cat, he jumped in the air, landed like lead and shook himself as a dog coming out of the water, reared gigantically, stood on his front legs and kicked his hind ones, sprang forward with a dozen jolting spasms, whirled aside, reared again—until the boy was shot off into the dust, from which he did not rise.

Chalkeye carried him to his room of luxury among the photographs and soft skins and rugs, and put him on his bed, and got his clothes off; while the widow stood by, useless, lamenting, in the way, crying out that if the boy died she would kill Jack Saunders, she would.

"That'll be my job," said Chalkeye quietly. "Get some water and shut your mouth."

She carried out the first part of this direction;

the rest was quite beyond her powers. She was a pretty girl, and still young, with an aspect which told plainly what sort of widow she was—quite the ordinary specimen of her kind. She meant no mischief, but she loved to burst on people with explosive news; and so on her errand for the water her tongue was free, and all Drybone learned of Chalkeye's intention. Except that she sowed a few more seeds for the future harvest, I don't think she did any harm. Saunders wished no trouble with Chalkeye; the cow-puncher had too many friends; and no steps had to be taken unless Strawberries died.

Strawberries did not die. After lying unconscious for two days, he opened his eyes and quietly remarked:

“Leon-i-das
On a one-eyed ass.”

This was a quotation. He did not go on with it; he shut his eyes and seemed to fall away from life again. I suppose that poem must have been the last thing in his mind before his concussion. Some hours later, Chalkeye came in from the round-up for news. At the opening of the door, Strawberries waked and surveyed us, and after a time asked languidly:

“Am I a one-eyed ass?”

Chalkeye looked at me in alarm. “Good God!” he whispered.

In the face in the bed appeared a flicker of the confiding smile.

“Am I in the hands of God? Is it as bad as that?”

"You'll get well," stated Chalkeye, instantly reassured. "And you be quick about it. When the round-up's over, the boys want you to go on an elk hunt with them."

So that circus ended happily, and the lonesome country liked Strawberries better than ever. And before the boys went on their elk hunt, he received an unusual honor.

It was remembered that he was interested in the characteristic. Now a stranger had come through the country some weeks ago, and after displaying very marked and exceptional ability by selling the same stolen horses to a succession of different purchasers, had thoughtfully sought another neighborhood. But here it seemed that his skill had fallen short. A conversation stopped abruptly upon my entrance to the cabin of luxury one afternoon. Some ranch owners whom I knew slightly sat there and looked at me and said the weather was fine.

If Strawberries was aware that they did not wish me to know what they had been saying to him, he chose to disregard it.

"Then you mean," said he, "that you're bringing me an invitation?"

"You're the only outsider that's in the party," said one visitor.

"There'd be no outsider," added another, "only he has went too far, and deserves no consideration."

"Of course you'll not speak of this," said a third, to me.

"But you say you haven't caught him yet," said Strawberries.

"We have him located."

"He might give you the slip, you know."

"I guess you can leave that to us."

"And am I to start at the post and be in at the finish?"

"That was our idea."

Strawberries shook his head in silence.

They rose.

"You understand," said one, "it's the rule of the game. He knows the rules, he took his chances. That man is too tough for this country. We've got it to do. You understand?"

"Oh, quite, quite! Don't apologize."

"We're not apologizing to anybody."

"I do!" exclaimed Strawberries quickly. "I shouldn't have said that. It was rotten. And thanks so very much. And in your place, possibly, you know, I—but it's not quite the same thing, is it? So you won't mind?"

If Strawberries ever adopted the custom of the country enough to take part in a lynching, it was not in Wyoming. What he may have done elsewhere lies beyond my knowledge in the many regions where his wanderings took him. That visit, when the ranchmen sat in his cabin and showed him this peculiar mark of their esteem, was my last sight of him at this stage of his career, the last, that is, of any consequence.

I was gone when the elk hunt came off, and no tidings of Strawberries reached me in the East for several months, when friends in Cheyenne wrote asking me what I knew about him. There it was again, the Doughgy's doubt on that first day, forgotten as we grew accustomed to Strawberries!

Well, at Cheyenne and at the various ranches of my friends to whom he now paid long visits, it became forgotten in the same way.

The next thing was a newspaper clipping. "Popular Peer Pushes Polo," was its skilful caption. It was mailed me by a ranch friend on the Chugwater. The same friend gave me news of the popular peer when we met at Harvard on Commencement Day. At the Cheyenne Club, on the Chugwater, at Bordeaux, wherever Strawberries went, and he seemed to have gone everywhere in Wyoming, he first raised doubts and then won hearts; and the doubts were forgotten.

The college graduates who had ranches in the country encouraged his long visits, even though they knew he made them to save expense, and even though at the Cheyenne Club on the rare occasions when he ordered a drink, it was seldom for anyone but himself; I have said that he modified nothing. Nobody minded this in an Englishman; they were glad to pay for his drinks, they owed him so much.

His energy didn't stop with the polo he organized—at that time a complete novelty; in the following years he carried out his plan for a steeplechase, and another newspaper cutting came to me in the East. "Swell Snugly Sits Saddle." He sat it in several places, for on my next visit to Drybone, three summers later, he was staying with the cavalry officers at Fort McKinney, and had started them steeplechasing on Clear Creek.

"But none of us can make him touch a card," said my friend of the Cheyenne Club on Commencement Day.

"He never does at Drybone," said I.

He never did anywhere. I saw him often during those years, but there's nothing to tell of our meetings; he had become an institution. Drybone remained his headquarters, but sometimes I found him at Cheyenne, where he would lie in bed at the club for two days at a time, remarking that if I would tell him something to get up for, he would do it. Then his energy would come uppermost, and it would be polo, or steeplechasing, or a journey to Montana for greyhounds to course antelope with (this was a failure), or an extended hunt for elk in the fall or for bear in the spring.

Yes, he was an institution: the sight of him had grown so familiar to the country that it was only now and then that the mystery of his unexplained coming was remembered. His money continued to arrive regularly, and a sporting paper he called the *Pink Un*; and almost every mail brought him letters that bore English stamps; and these he seemed always to answer within a day or two, giving a long morning to it among his photographs and souvenirs. If I came in at these times, he would look up from his writing, and I knew that he wished to be alone by the very civility of his, "Oh, it's you! Come in." And as I went out, his apology followed—"If you don't mind."

That's one picture of him I retain: the latest *Pink Un* lying near him, his elbows spread flat out, his head near the blue blotting-paper, his flaxen hair rumped in the effort of composition; and on the walls around him, those faces of handsome, arrogant men and women, distant and impassive. What was in those letters? Questions about sisters,

horses, dogs, home? Messages to old companions? Was he gazing through bars at sunlight while he bent over the blotting-paper?

"D'you figure he's got a life sentence?" said the Doughgy to Chalkeye one day. "D'you figure they'll commute for good conduct? Or will they let him back on parole?"

"I ain't figuring at all," said Chalkeye. "It's his present I'm vouching for, not his past, or his future. And I've given all men notice to that effect."

"Hump!" laughed the Doughgy. "You needn't get so hot about it." And he protracted his teasing. "I expect," said he in a tone of judicial thought, "lords and barons and high-ups like that don't condescend to take notice of what low-downs like you and me think of their morals."

"Since when have you been practising morals?"

"Oh, I don't practise 'em or preach 'em, any more than you. But we haven't had his advantages."

A light broke on me, and I addressed the Doughgy. "Do you mean to say that Drybone blames Strawberries for doing just what it does itself?"

"I don't mean to say anything," laughed the Doughgy. "But would he do it at home?"

In that word lay the pith of the matter. The widow, whenever Strawberries went away, had always moved from the hotel into his cabin by way of taking care of it during his absence, and moved out upon his return, but when he had returned this spring, she had remained. Now, although Drybone hadn't a moral to its back, this indifference to appearances in a visitor who would respect them in

his own country—weren't the free-born citizens of Drybone the equals of any English subject?

"I see your point," I said gravely to the Doughgy, "though I never met this particular assertion of democratic faith before. But after all, there's a proverb that when you're in Rome, you do as Rome does."

"It don't apply," retorted the Doughgy. "Oh, well," he added, "this country would forgive him a lot more than that." And he dropped his mischievous banter, which had been entirely to reach Chalkeye through one of the few joints in his armor.

In this it was quite successful and it left Chalkeye moody; and a prolonged silence on his part ended in his remarking when the Doughgy had gone: "He says he doesn't expect to stay here forever."

"Strawberries says?"

"Yes. It was the other day when I told him he'd ought to send his woman back to the hotel. I wish she had taken Jack Saunders."

"Then the Doughgy was right!"

"Damn the Doughgy. I guess Strawberries is figuring that it has lasted—his stay, I mean—a pretty long while now, and maybe back in his home they'll agree some day that it has been long enough. Especially if they're told by reliable parties that he never——" Chalkeye stopped abruptly and reverted to the widow. "Of course there's never any use me telling him to do or to quit doing a thing," he finished, moody again. "But," he asserted presently, "he'll work through. That boy'll hold on."

A chance word will sometimes wake us up to unsuspected thoughts. When he said that the boy

would work through, he said it to help himself to believe it, and it disclosed to me that a question had been buried alive in my mind ever since Strawberries had taken to lying in bed all day at the Cheyenne Club. Was Strawberries, anchored no longer to his home restraints, drifting toward the rocks? There had been more than playfulness in the Doughgy's banter; Drybone might forgive the boy this and that, but we began to hear that the wives of some of the cattlemen had requested their husbands not to bring him to their ranches any more. I don't know whether he ever got word of this or not; but in looking back on it all today, it is easy to see that this point is where the sky of Strawberries and of Chalkeye, his loyal sponsor, who was vouching for his present, began to grow overcast.

The Doughgy was reading the latest Cheyenne paper at the hotel. "Hello," said he, "here's another swell Englishman coming our way."

"One of 'em's already more'n I have use for," remarked Jack Saunders, who was dealing cards to himself because there was no one else to deal them to.

The Doughgy grinned at the gambler. "I wouldn't be anxious. This new one ain't likely to wreck your new home."

"What's his name?" asked Saunders with indifference as he continued to deal.

"Let's see, what was it?" said the Doughgy. "His name's Deepmere."

Saunders grunted, and the Doughgy read more items until he had read them all. "Wonder if Strawberries knows him," he remarked.

To this there was not even a grunt in response,

and the Doughgy lounged out of the hotel. He met Strawberries in a few minutes and told him the news.

"Deepmere coming!"

And so Strawberries did know him; after that exclamation, he went straight to the hotel. He borrowed the paper and pored over the brief paragraph. He might have been learning the words by heart; but when he looked up, his eyes seemed to be staring at a host of memories, and he sat motionless for a long time, keeping his unconscious hand over the paper where he had laid it on the broad table.

From that same table he had watched the shooting on the night of his arrival; today, with many another experience between, through years of unspoken endurance that the recording angel would surely take into account when his sins should come to be weighed, the experience of a great emotion was breaking like waves against his spirit. I went out of the office, for although he had himself so well in hand that no stranger would have been arrested by his aspect, for me it seemed like peeping through the keyhole to be near him during that inward storm.

Afterward, just as after his trance in the post-office, when he had held the black-edged letter in his hand, he grew loquacious and animated. Even his appearance became more like the boy he had been, and less like the visibly coarsened man he had become.

"That's Deepmere," he said to me the next day in his cabin.

I had often looked at the photograph; a youth

in his early twenties, of much the same age as Strawberries had been when he appeared to us in the graveyard that sunny morning in the distant past, while the sage-brush smell was flowing in from the warm, undulated miles. I looked very closely at the face of Deepmere now; handsome, arrogant, impassive; it did not answer the question I was asking; no more did any of those faces on his walls, all handsome, arrogant, impassive.

"We were both at the House," said Strawberries. "Went up together."

So they had been college mates at Oxford; and I told this to the Doughgy.

The Doughgy asked the same question which I had asked of the impassive photographs.

"D'you figure Deepmere's looking forward to meetin' his old friend?"

Some other one of the cow-punchers present rounded this out. "And is the old friend impatient to wring Deepmere's hand?"

Different voices spoke various surmises, until Chalkeye said:

"I guess this country don't need any foreigner to tell it what it thinks on any subject."

They united on that. Drybone was not interested in British opinion of Strawberries.

"But," said the Doughgy, "how about it if Strawberries happens to be interested in British opinion?"

Their curiosity was not idle, but it was less keen than mine; and not even to me was the matter of such crucial moment as it was to Chalkeye: the sponsor's concern for the welfare of his pupil had become a part of his life. I don't know what he

might not have done if he had witnessed the meeting which too many of us did see, and which gave the answer to our question. Had nobody been present, or if Strawberries had only avoided the meeting—but why speculate? The exile craved an answer too hungrily, suspense had gone beyond further endurance; that must come to an end; and I am pretty sure that he had grown to believe what he desired to believe, and had persuaded himself that after three years it was all right, it would end well. Chalkeye missed the worst.

Until I reflected that of course Deepmere, having stopped at Cheyenne, would not be taken by surprise at coming face to face with Strawberries in this far corner of the earth, I marveled at a performance so perfect. A group lounged in the office waiting for mail; the rattle of the stage brought them as usual to the door to watch its arrival. The stage drove up, the brake scraped against the tire, the mail-sack was flung down, and as the single passenger stepped to the ground, Strawberries appeared out of the office and spoke lightly:

“What are you doing here?” The casualness was well managed; not a hint of anything out of the common; they might have dined together last night.

The passenger looked at Strawberries blank and straight with an empty eye, as if he was not there.

“Does one get dinner here?” he inquired of everybody in general.

“Dinnes leddy!” screamed Madden from the hotel porch.

“Somewhere to wash, I suppose?” said the passenger, again most impersonally; and walked off.

That was all. A few seconds did the whole of it; not much longer than it needs to whip out a weapon and kill a man. Unbroken silence continued as Deepmere departed, followed by many eyes that could not look at Strawberries. By the sound of his steps, and next by the distant slam of a door, it was known that he had betaken himself to his cabin.

In there, the photographs awaited him, those handsome, arrogant faces, looking at him out of his past. He knew now what they thought of him; their message had been clearly delivered by his old college friend. When the witnesses of that meeting had shuffled awkwardly into the post-office, while the mail was being distributed they began to mutter their opinions of the old college friend, whom the stage presently took across the bridge to Buffalo; but I doubt if their indignation or their sympathy would have brought much comfort to Strawberries in this hour of his blasting disillusion: the only backing that he craved had been denied him forever. What could have been in those long letters that he sent home? Had he actually written himself into a belief that the hour was on the way when the ban would be lifted? Nobody will ever know. And what was in the letters that came to him? These went on coming, but never again was Strawberries seen to answer them.

How could he bring himself to remain at the scene and with the witnesses of his repudiation? Why did he not leave Drybone and go—anywhere—so long as it was among strangers? Perhaps Chalkeye hit the truth when he said that Strawberries had found out where his real friends were.

For a week he kept wholly to himself; and this seclusion was respected by those same witnesses whose eyes had looked away from him at the post-office. No word of his ever gave a hint of what was in his mind during this time. Was it a spiritual wrestling match, and did his better self make a stand, even though the door of hope had been shut in his face?

At any rate, at the end of those seven days of isolation, he strolled casually into the hotel one evening, spoke to those he met as if nothing had happened, lounged in the office a while reading the latest papers, and then strolled on into the gambling saloon, bought some chips and sat down to the game.

I have never seen a cat when, after long patience at a mouse-hole, the mouse appears; but that is what Jack Saunders made me think of as he watched Strawberries enter the door of his den. His eye changed, a sudden light seemed to fill it, and then his usual look of indifference returned. The momentary flare was nothing that the ordinary on-looker would notice, any more than he would see significance in the step Strawberries had taken.

One or two were there who remarked that they had always thought cards were against his principles, but that they must have been mistaken, for he was evidently at home in drawing and betting; with faro likewise he proved familiar; later, he acquired what Drybone could teach him, and taught Drybone some games of chance not in vogue there.

It was Chalkeye, whom I met one night over at Point of Rocks on my way to the railroad and the

East, who read deeper. He had been for a "whirl" in Cheyenne, as he expressed it; and after hearing from me the latest news of the country, he began to talk slowly, with many pauses; and it was curious how he began.

"I could have made a dandy cattleman out of him," he said, "if he was going to stay in the country." He did not name Strawberries. It was the way you refer to the dead sometimes, soon after their death.

"Perhaps you will do it yet," said I.

"No." There was a long pause. "Does he win or lose?"

"Both."

"Does he play every night?"

"He's at it whenever I drop in."

"What does he do all day?"

"Lies in bed. Gets up at card time."

"Wins, you say?"

"Off and on."

"Saunders will get everything he has." There was another long pause. "You'd think he'd tear those photographs up. They've got no use for him. What use has he got for them any more?"

"Well," said I, "they're likely to be all he will ever see of home."

After an interval, Chalkeye said: "I expect you and I don't need to guess what the trouble was."

This was the plainest word about it he had ever spoken. Silence was my answer to it, and in further silence we sat for a while; I grieved for Chalk-eye—he was cut to the depths.

"What is your idea?" he presently asked.

"Why, just that."

"I mean, was it a first offense? Would they come down so hard on just one slip?"

"How should I know?"

"D'you figure that fellow Deepmere represents general opinion?"

"How can I know that, either?"

"D'you figure it has broken his nerve?"

"Why did he begin again?"

"I wonder if he has spotted what kind of game he's buckin'."

We asked each other more questions like these, which neither of us could answer; it was a way of thinking aloud together. Then Chalkeye drew out a folded handkerchief and showed me a letter it held.

"I was going to get you to put your name to that."

I read:

"To all whom this may concern:

"We the undersigned desire to state that during the several years we have been acquainted with the bearer, we have never seen him take part in any gambling game, or known of his doing so. His strict abstention from all such pursuits has been conspicuous in a community where card games are a general practise. We have found the gentleman uniformly companionable, manly and upstanding."

To this document many signatures were appended—the names of all the leading men in the country were there.

"They shaped that up for me at the Cheyenne Club," Chalkeye explained. "I got them to do it after that Deepmere fellow had acted that way to him. They claimed it wouldn't do any good. But

I thought that if he wanted to go home it might help him some."

He took the letter from my hand and was going to tear it up.

"Oh, no!" said I. "It may come in yet, somehow."

He shook his head, but put the paper back in its handkerchief.

"Most folks," he pursued, "can drink safely. Now and then you meet some poor fellow that can't. One glass of anything starts him off, and the day comes when stopping has got beyond him, and the only way for him is never to touch it. Cards are the same with some. Strawberries knew that, you see. And I was betting on him. But his old friend Deepmere happened along. How could you foresee . . ." The cow-puncher's voice failed him, and he paused a moment. "Well," he resumed with regained control, "I could have made a dandy cattleman out of him. Well, guess I'll hit the hay."

That was the last that I saw of Chalkeye for six months.

I came up the river in the stage, and there waiting for me was what I had missed in cities every day—the air, the light, the mountains, the open world, the welcome of the sage-brush smell; even a look at the graveyard would have pleased me, but we passed the turnout to it, and I was actually glad to see the horrible hotel. Nothing was changed in Drybone—save the luck of Strawberries.

It was the Doughgy who greeted me with the odd news that Strawberries had suddenly begun to win more than he lost. During the winter he had

descended through ups and downs to the bottom of pennilessness; he had parted with one possession after another; he had sold everything that anyone would buy; he had pledged his remittances in advance; he had raffled his three horses; he was afoot. To be sure, the Doughgy continued, this made small matter to a man in bed all day and at cards all night.

The boys were sorry for him. His woman stuck to him. She was just as crazy about him as the first day. She paid the bills when his credit was gone. How she got the money, several could explain. He was still in deep, but last week Jack Saunders had come back from a visit to Laramie and found Strawberries was winning. Not every night. Madden won off him, but he won more off Madden.

It was ups and downs again, but the ups had it.

"Sounds like a fever chart," said I.

"Fever, all right!" the Doughgy laughed. "Severe case. Madden makes a man think some."

"Another severe case," said I; at which the Doughgy gave me a singular stare.

I saw Strawberries once in this hour of his luck, before going to a ranch for a couple of days. His face had become the blighted countenance which had turned toward me like an apparition on that night of his arrival, after he had been staring in at the gambling den. The fever had burned his youth, and more than his youth, away; if you did not look twice, you would hardly see that he had been a gentleman.

A sudden turn of luck, and at this late day? Two and two can readily be put together, if you have the key. I thought of Saunders and the cat

and the mouse. Nothing seemed to fit; yet Strawberries winning seemed of darker portent than Strawberries losing. And then, when I was again in Drybone, Chalkeye unlocked the mystery. I was writing letters up in my room at the hotel, and he walked in without knocking and sat on the edge of my bed.

"I am getting Strawberries out of the country tonight," said he, very quietly, keeping his eye on his boots. That put the two and two together: a new offense, and caught in it here, as at home.

"But," I said, "didn't he know that Jack Saunders was certain to see through it?"

"He knew. But he didn't know about Madden."

"Madden!" I exclaimed. "Madden!"

"Not so loud. Have you supposed the Chink keeps losing his wages for nothing?"

The pen fell from my hand, and I listened to him, dazed.

"Four or five are in it. Do you remember that man from Powder River, and the shooting? He had been dissatisfied with the division of spoils. None of that gang is slicker than the Chink. They got tired waiting, so they greased the slide."

"Cat and mouse," I murmured.

"Sure. And his girl was the mouse. She had known the old ways of the establishment. They figured she would be fool enough to think no changes had been made. Jack went to Laramie, Madden played being busy over his wash—well, she found the cards where they wanted her to find them." Chalkeye sighed. "I'll give you all the particulars tomorrow—the time is short."

"You mean," said I, beginning to see through

it, "Strawberries fixed those cards and she put them back?"

Chalkeye nodded. "Jack can pay up old scores now. When Strawberries comes to the game to-night, Jack is going to kill him. It's safe because"—here Chalkeye's voice was very quiet—"Strawberries has been winning from some of the boys who trusted him." After a pause, in which he seemed to sum up and select what more he would say, he added in a voice that was strangely toneless: "I don't want Strawberries killed. We are going to where I have told him a woman was buried with her jewels. I've said it would be death if they caught us. He'll dig. He'd never have stooped so low, once. Then I've fixed up a fake alarm. He'll go. He'll stay gone, I guess. I guess," Chalkeye concluded, "Strawberries would have held on if Deepmere hadn't happened along."

"None of this appeals to me very much," I said. "Why invent——"

"Do you think it appeals to me?" he interrupted, flaming into sudden violence. "Find a better way."

"Let him have the truth."

The puncher's eyes fell, and by that I read his heart.

"Not easy for you," I pursued, touching his knee, "but surely better for him?"

Still he held his eyes averted. He was bent over with trouble. "I couldn't be sure——" he began; he left it unsaid, and again I read his heart. To let the man he had loved and vouched for have the truth was a bitterness beyond his courage, and worse still, he feared there was not enough man left in Strawberries to stand up to it and kill, or be

killed. By his fantastic scheme of the jewels, he had provided a way out. But what a way!

"I'd let it alone," said I.

"No, you wouldn't."

He walked out without another word, and I listened to the slow and heavy tread of his boots down the stairs.

I sat with my pen in hand, writing nothing and forgetting time, while the day faded; until Madden called loudly from below that I would soon be too late for supper.

The day grew wholly dark, the lamps burned in the saloon, shining on the stacks of bottles and the pictures of pink women; and the usual group, with a few stray players, gathered at the tables. The sound of chips and of the voices betting was very distinct in the quiet house. The breath of the sage-brush, the breath of the wilderness, the eternal, impassive witness of our deeds and lives, came through the open door.

I saw Jack Saunders look up and then continue his game. Some time elapsed, and he looked up again, watching the door; this time he whispered some impatient word to his neighbor, and the playing went on. It was a good hour later that something far off made one listen, and I saw the head of Saunders jerk up quickly. There were shots very distant; that was all; and once again the gambler muttered to his neighbor.

This time he did not resume playing, but sat scowling at the door. The figure he watched for did not come.

A sort of dreariness dulled me, thinking it all over; it was all degraded and dreary; and I got up

to go to bed. As I crossed the office, the girl entered and went straight to the saloon door. By her theatrical pose it was plain that the lust for telling sensational news was on her—but Saunders spoke first.

“To hell with *you*,” said he. “Where’s the tame pet you’re keeping?”

Then she had her triumph and her climax; and her voice rose to the level of it.

“Gone where you’ll never get him, Jack Saunders! Chalkeye has got you fooled!”

The gambler sprang up and listened to nothing more. While she continued ranting to her heart’s content, he dragged on his chaps, snatched his quirt, buckled his holster, and would have been out to get his horse, but Chalkeye stood in the office. Saunders shot so quickly that I did not see him fire; and almost as quickly the puncher shot back. I think both missed; but neither stopped.

They passed me and went out of the house. I heard them as they moved through the dark, firing, and I heard myself counting the shots mechanically; they seemed to cut a trail in the night, they went on and on; and when they ceased, I had forgotten how many I had counted. I was standing in the office where I had been when it began; I had not moved a step.

No one else was in the house, and now I remembered that I had seen them running by. I remained quite still, and next saw the Doughy at the door.

“Chalkeye is dead,” said he. “Both are dead. Maybe you would like to come up and help fix Chalkeye.”

“Come up?”

"Saunders ran from him when he found he was hit. Chalkeye followed him up-stairs to his woman's room. He shot Chalkeye from the floor."

The puncher lay across the threshold, a wound through his breast, the only one. Somewhere in the back of the room people were attending to Saunders—I didn't notice. The Doughgy and I did not touch Chalkeye at once; we stood and looked at his quiet face. There was no violence in it; he lay in a sort of dignity, and there was a grace in the repose of his long arms.

It may have been minutes that we stood looking at the face.

"He thinks it is just as well," said the Doughgy. "He had changed a heap. Dying would not have suited him a little bit, once. He loved living up to the hilt. Better company I never traveled with. Gosh, how he could ride. Yes, these last years had changed him. It must be tough to see the apple of your eye go rotten."

Something in the dead man's pocket caught my sight, and I stooped and pulled out a handkerchief and unfolded a letter and handed it to the Doughgy. It was not too stained to be read, and the Doughgy began aloud, "To all whom this may concern," and then read silently; but when he had gone a few lines he turned his head away, and I took the sheet from his hand as he walked to the window and stood with his back to me looking out into the darkness.

So these two also went to the hill of upright and fallen headboards. At the end of the burying, the Doughgy and I lingered in the sun and the silence, looking off at the undulating miles.

"Do you remember the morning when Strawberries came up the river and Chalkeye borrowed your glasses?"

"Oh, yes. I remember."

"They say the Elkhorn railroad will get as far as this next year," said the Doughgy. "Good-by, Old West. I shouldn't wonder if I pulled my freight for a new country one of these days."

He did; and from him in California, I had two of the three glimpses of Strawberries I still have to tell, after his path wound away from mine. Once from Redlands the Doughgy wrote me that he had seen Strawberries clerking in the What Cheer House, in that town. Strawberries had not seen him; and soon after had lost this job. Again the Doughgy wrote during the days when the Western Pacific was being constructed across Nevada.

"I was getting good pay as foreman of a bridge gang," he said; "and one night I went to the honkatonk to spend some and make a night of it. Strawberries was pounding a piano as professional player for a roomful of drunken girls with their men. I didn't spend my money. I went out."

My last news was in 1910, when I ran up the river from Cheyenne in a flivver. Two railroads had come. There was a new town called Casper. Drybone had long been wholly abandoned. There were oil claims. Along the river where the sagebrush had grown and the cattle had been rounded up were fields and fruit and fences: not everywhere; but it was gone, the true, real thing was gone. The scenery was there, but the play was over.

Just a touch, a whiff of the past met me as we crossed La Parelle creek. We came to some high

sage-brush along a bottom, and I smelled it, and one of those sudden cravings for days bygone rushed over me—to hunt, to camp, to revel in young joys; I longed to speak some magic word and evoke the golden years—no others—and live them again, and then pass on, or pass out, or whatever follows this. We came to the turnout for the graveyard. It was visible still, but I did not wish to look at that. Then we reached what had been Drybone.

"I'll get out here," I said to the young, green chauffeur.

"There's nothing here."

"I know. There used to be. Wait here."

I walked through weeds, and splinters of sheds, and rusted objects. Three boards of the hotel were standing. Part of the post-office was there. The cabin of luxury was fairly whole, and all around it gleamed empty tin cans. There was a door; and when I saw that, I walked up and opened it.

He was lying in bed, reading a paper.

"Oh, there you are!" he said.

So he had come back, actually summoned by that same Past which we had shared for a while, the Past where his real friends had been! I liked this remnant of the man better than ever I had liked the man.

"Thank God somebody has come to lunch," said he. "Now I'll have to get up and cook something."

This he did; and for an hour we talked about anything to keep off the one thing in our minds. The photographs were there. I suppose the widow

had sent things after him. And now he lay in bed and ate tinned food, unless company happened by.

The young, green chauffeur came to see what had become of me, and as I was walking away, Strawberries stood in his door.

"It all used to be very jolly," he said.

I nodded and walked on.

"I say," he called.

I turned. There he stood, and into his face came a something that recalled the old smile like a pressed flower.

"Chalkeye was a good fellow, you know."

"Yes."

"I liked Chalkeye."

"Yes."

"I suppose you're thinking he was a better fellow than me?"

"Yes."

"Right."

FOR SEVENTEEN YEARS I RAN
THE WHITE HOUSE

By Elizabeth Jaffray

AND now I leave the White House. For seventeen and a half years it has been my only home.

As I write these first lines of my memoirs I have said a formal good-by to Mrs. Coolidge and a warm farewell to the faithful old White House servants, some of whom have been my wards during all the years I have been there.

They have been great years, too—these days of the Tafts, the Wilsons, the Hardings and the Coolidges. Possibly the later years have been a little hard and maybe a trifle bitter, but they belong to the past and when I look back now it is through a vista of happy memories.

When I think of the White House I think only of the fact that it was a home for me for the best part of five administrations. I have known four Presidents and five First Ladies of the Land as intimately as one knows the members of one's own family. I have lived in their homes; for, after all, the White House is no remote castle, but a plain white house—a home full of the hundred and one petty details, triumphs, worries, heartaches, pleasures that every home faces.

So it is that these Presidents and these First Ladies of the Land are not heroes but simple human beings to me—and I recall their little vanities and peculiarities with nothing but affection.

I wonder if I could put in a sentence the single characteristic that I remember most vividly about each of them:

Taft was the best-natured President.

Wilson was the kindest President.

Harding was the best-dressed President.

Coolidge saves the most money.

Mrs. Taft was the tiniest First Lady of the Land.

The first Mrs. Wilson was the most motherly.

The second Mrs. Wilson was the most affectionate.

Mrs. Harding had the loveliest clothes.

Mrs. Coolidge is ostensibly the happiest.

These are only bits of memories that I carry away from those seventeen years—bits out of the thousands of impressions that have been stamped forever in my mind.

I went to the White House as its first housekeeper and manager because fate had turned a trick on me. Instead of having my own home and my own servants I found that with the death of my husband I had to earn my own living. For two or three years I superintended a house of half a dozen servants and then for a year I acted as a social secretary in New York.

On the evening of December 3rd, 1908—towards the close of the picturesque Roosevelt administration—a telephone call came from an exclusive employment bureau in New York asking me to be at the office at eleven o'clock on the following morning, as they had something of importance to suggest to me. The manager refused to tell me anything about it over the telephone.

Promptly at eleven I was ushered into the private

office and Miss Wilde, the head of the agency, seated me close by her desk.

"Mrs. Jaffray," she began, "I think I have the most unusual position in America for you—and I think you are the one person I know who can fill it."

I begged her to tell me what it was at once.

"Well, whether it comes through or not you must promise absolute secrecy about it. It is to take over the full management of the White House for President-elect Taft and Mrs. Taft."

"Oh! I couldn't possibly do that," I answered. "I have never managed such a big and important house. I couldn't think of it."

Miss Wilde had only started to convince me that I could do it when Mrs. Taft, accompanied by Mrs. Cowles, a sister of President Roosevelt, was announced. I shall never forget my first glimpse of them. The taller of the two—whom I found out a moment later to be President Roosevelt's sister—was dressed in a crimson suit and Mrs. Taft was less conspicuously attired in gray, but had a warm and friendly look about her.

Miss Wilde immediately introduced us and then promptly left us to our own devices.

"Sit down!" Mrs. Taft commanded me sharply.

I was dumfounded at her order—but I sat. Mrs. Taft looked at me and then began:

"Mr. Taft and I are contemplating changing the plan of running the White House. There has always been a steward for the routine management and outside caterers have been brought in for the State functions and great dinners. We are thinking of getting a housekeeper and manager and doing

away with both the stewards and the caterer. Miss Wilde has recommended you highly."

"But I couldn't possibly do it," I protested. "I really don't want the place."

For two and a half hours we talked. Before we were through I liked this rather outspoken, determined lady who in less than ninety days was to be the Mistress of the White House. And when at twenty minutes to two Mrs. Taft rose and bade me good-by I had promised to come for three months to see how it would work out.

The allotment made from government funds for this position at that time was only one thousand dollars a year. Mrs. Taft's winning persistency had overcome even this objection. I simply found myself swept into the position.

Up to this time I had never been in Washington and knew absolutely nothing about the White House. I was to report there at noon on Inauguration Day, March 4th, 1909. On the evening of March 3rd I came on to the capital and stopped at a house on the street which is just across the park from the White House. The following morning Mrs. Taft called for me in the new White House motor brougham—which incidentally was the first motor-car ever to be used at the White House. She drove me all over the city, pointing out the best shops and stores, the public market and all the points of historic interest. That afternoon and evening Washington had one of her famous March snow-storms. The next morning, Inauguration Day, there were flurries of snow and six inches of slush on the streets.

Promptly at twelve I crossed the square, with

a negro butler with my satchel trailing behind, and for the first time walked through the great front doors of the White House. An usher showed me up to the rooms that were to be mine for so many years. They were directly over the front entrance on the second floor, and consisted of a large bedroom and bath, beautifully decorated and appointed, and a small room off of it that I used as an office. Many years later when the Princess Cantacuzene, granddaughter of General Grant, was visiting at the White House, she told me that she had been born in my bedroom. These rooms had been occupied by the Roosevelt boys.

At one o'clock the new President, Mr. Taft, and a large party, numbering about 175, came directly from the Inaugural ceremony to the White House for luncheon. This luncheon is always arranged and paid for by the retiring President for the incoming one but the outgoing President does not attend. Incidentally, this particular luncheon was the last White House affair of any kind handled by outside caterers from the coming of the Tafts until the second of the soldier receptions given after the war by President Wilson and Mrs. Wilson. (At one of the post-war receptions, by the way, over 400 heavy silver-plated White House spoons bearing the official engraving "President's House" were missed.)

Immediately the luncheon was over I began my duties as housekeeper and general manager of the White House. From time immemorial these duties had fallen to a steward—who, as I have said, called in caterers for all the great functions.

For one thing, this meant the White House al-

ways had a formal and austere atmosphere about it. And for another, and very important one, it meant that the ancient custom of giving certain percentages of all purchases to the cooks and stewards, added thousands of dollars' additional expense to the already heavy bills that had to be paid directly out of the President's pockets.

President Taft was not a rich man. Neither he nor Mrs. Taft grumbled over the heavy bills that their endless entertainments entailed—but they did want to save money. So it was that they decided to do away with the ancient and wasteful manner of running the White House, treat it simply as a home and have it managed just as any other big home where considerable entertainment was necessary would be managed.

Before ten o'clock that first morning after the inauguration I had talked over with Mrs. Taft what we would have for luncheon and dinner that day.

I have the luncheon menu before me as I write: Bouillon, fried smelts with tartar sauce, lamb chops, green peas, Bermuda potatoes, raspberry jelly with whipped cream, coffee, salted almonds, bonbons.

That afternoon Mrs. Taft was giving her first large tea—a custom she inaugurated herself—and there was special baking to be done. There were several odds and ends to be bought for the kitchen and then there was a question of some new linen.

With the daily interview over I called for my carriage and started on my first shopping expedition. A beautiful team of horses and two coaches, a brougham for winter use and an open carriage

for summer use, had been assigned to me, with a remarkable old colored driver, Brown, who had driven all the Presidents since the days of General Grant.

Time and again it was suggested that I give up my horses and have a motor-car assigned to me, but I always refused. Even down to the very last day I shopped, June 30th of this year, I steadfastly held to my carriage. For many years it was the last one used by the White House. In fact, it was one of the few left in Washington, but somehow it seemed to me to be a part of the dignity and tradition of the White House that no motor-car, no matter how beautiful, could replace.

Throughout all my seventeen and a half years at the White House my daily program remained practically the same. I would have a short conference with the President's wife in the morning after I had studied the day's social calendar and worked out the menus with the cook. Food was only a small part of this conference; there would be the endless problem of keeping the whole White House in order—the servants, the linen, the silver, the furniture, the decorations and furnishings—and a thousand and one other details.

Once started in my carriage I would have Brown drive me straight to the great public market. For years I dealt there at three stalls. From Gatti and Anselmo I bought my fruits and vegetables; from the New York Beef Company, the meats; and from Jarvin, the fish, oysters, sea food and game.

I would buy in large quantities—for, besides the President's own table, from 19 to 22 servants had to be fed three meals a day. Among my notes I

find this calculation: 19 servants, 3 meals a day, 30 days in a month, total 1,710 meals; 7 in President's family make 630 meals a month; average of three house guests, 3 meals daily, total 270 meals a month; a grand total of 2,610 meals each month.

So I would buy butter by the tub, potatoes by the barrel, fruit and green vegetables by the crate. While I would always buy the best the markets offered, I refused from the start to buy expensive luxuries out of season.

Right here it might be interesting to give the itemized account of the food bill for an average month at the White House during the early days of the Tafts—remembering that in those days food was about half its present price. This particular account is for May—which, following the close of the season of great dinners and state entertainments, is a quiet and inexpensive month.

Meat	\$205.59
Bread	24.85
Butter and eggs	103.38
Tomatoes and peas	9.79
Lemon and ice	24.48
Candy	9.79
Fish	52.09
Poultry	37.70
Berries	1.50
Tea	1.10
Wine for punch	24.10
Meat and fish	50.78
Milk	57.62
Vegetables	105.98
Groceries	160.18
<hr/>	
Total	\$868.93

All these food bills were charged personally to "President Taft" and then on the first of each month the bills would be sent to the White House and I could check them over with the actual slips that were sent with the goods themselves. Then they would be turned over to one of the secretaries, who would write out the checks bearing the President's signature.

All purchases that had to do with the up-keep of the White House, except food, were charged to the "Office of Public Buildings and Public Parks" and on the first of each month bills in duplicate were sent to me. I would examine these accounts and o. k. them.

The above sum of \$868.93 covers, as I say, only the food bills for an average month of little entertainment, but it is the only expense connected in any way with the expenses of the White House that the President of the United States has to pay personally out of his annual salary of \$75,000.

Every other expense even remotely connected with the running and up-keep of the White House is met out of special appropriations—aggregating in all a sum of about \$200,000. Let me repeat that the only expense that the President must bear is the ordinary food bill and the personal clothes for himself and his family—and the latter are always charged at a special low price.

During the first four years that I was in the White House, President Taft had to pay personally not only the ordinary White House food bills but the cost of all the State dinners and official receptions. This meant that during the season—from December until February—the bills would amount to more than \$2,000 a month.

With the coming of the Harding administration, however, the extraordinary entertainment bills were not paid out of the President's own pocket but out of the President's traveling allowance of \$25,000 a year.

Besides having to pay for the ordinary State affairs, President Taft insisted that food be served at the four State receptions, with an average attendance of 2,000 guests each. This had not been done before, but the generous, good-natured Mr. Taft insisted that everybody be wined and dined. So it was that for these receptions I would bring in forty to fifty extra servants, and beautiful buffet suppers would be served to all the guests.

I find in my notes the menu of the first of President Taft's formal State receptions—the Diplomatic Reception at the White House on Tuesday, January 4th, 1910: lobster Newburg, chicken salad, assorted sandwiches, ice-cream, cakes, coffee, punch.

Every bit of the food for these great receptions, as well as for the four State dinners, was prepared in the White House kitchens by the three regular White House cooks. With rare exceptions, all the ices, cakes and desserts were always prepared at home. All this was a blow to the Washington caterers who for years had taken care of the big White House functions. The Washington caterer Charles Demonet told me that for years before my coming to the White House his accounts, paid out of the President's own funds, would average as much as \$20,000 a year.

All the servants are paid from a special White House appropriation. There are twenty-seven in

all and every one of them came directly under my personal supervision. I am going to give an exact list of them, with the salaries they received when I first went to the White House in 1909 and their present salaries:

Below Stairs	Salary 1909	1926
1 head cook	\$75	\$150
1 second cook	45	100
1 kitchen maid or 3rd cook	25	80
1 colored kitchen helper	20	80
3 colored laundresses	25	80
1 colored housemaid	60	95
1 head mechanic	110	175
1 electrician	100	150
1 day furnace man	50	95
1 night furnace man	50	95
First Floor		
4 colored footmen at front door . .	75	95
1 parlor-maid	60	95
Pantry and Dining-Rooms		
Head butler	65	105
Second man	50	95
Pantry man	40	90
Second Floor		
1 lady's maid	35	95
1 housemaid	25	75
1 chambermaid	25	65
1 colored houseman	60	95
1 house cleaner	50	80
Special valet (Brooks)	90	150
1 servants' floor maid	25	65
Total	\$1,160	\$2,205

Besides these 27 executives there are two head ushers or majordomos who are paid from other funds than the regular White House allowance. Before the Tafts came, the front doors were always guarded by special uniformed White House policemen. Mrs. Taft immediately had them replaced by four colored footmen.

All the servants with the exception of the white maids, the four footmen, the firemen and the mechanic and electrician, lived in the basement of the White House in rooms off the kitchens and had their meals at a common table. The up-stairs maids lived on the top floor. When there were more than ten for dinner at the President's table, one or more of the footmen would be called in to assist with the service. At such times they had their meals.

Every day was wash-day at the White House. The three colored maids in the laundry were kept busy with the immense amount of washing there was to do in just the ordinary running of the Executive Mansion. Before the coming of the Tafts there were as many as nine women employed in the laundry, but this number was at once cut to three.

Mrs. Taft and I had an embryo servants' revolt over the question of where the different servants should have their meals. For many years the servants had settled themselves into very distinct castes. At a special table the four or five highest colored men of the staff would dine in state—the head steward, the head coachmen and two or three others. At a table in the butler's pantry the dining-room staff would eat what was left over from the

President's own table. Then the laundry-women and scrub-women would eat at a table by themselves.

I immediately ordered that all the colored servants, regardless of rank or position, should eat at a single table and at a given hour. The white servants were to have their own table—but there was no other distinction of any kind. There were signs of sharp dissatisfaction, but when I promised dismissal the revolt died.

Except for the very big State dinners this same kitchen staff and servants' corps would take care of all the social functions of the White House. Early in October of each year, as soon as the dates of the State dinners and official receptions were given out, I would contract with the best of the free-lance servants in Washington to help at the big functions. For the receptions I would have twenty extra colored men in the gentlemen's check-room and four to eight colored servants for the up-stairs. In the Taft days when buffet suppers were served at the receptions twenty to thirty extra dining-room servants were necessary. All these bills for extra servants were paid for out of special appropriations.

It has long been the custom for White House servants to pass down from one administration to another. At the White House today there are four or five who have been there for more than half a dozen administrations. Wilkins, the colored houseman of the second floor, has been in this one position for thirty-one years. Strauss, the furnace man of the White House, has been there more than thirty years. Morris, head of the White House

machinery, has also been there a score of years. And Brooks, who came in with Taft, died only a few days before I write these lines. I wonder how many of the servants who are with the Coolidges today will be in the White House thirty years from now?

Brooks it was who always looked after the White House wines. When President Taft came in he had had sent from Europe a cellar of fine wines. There were two keys for the wine cabinets—one that I kept and one that I gave Brooks. Before any big dinner I would give Brooks a list of the wines wanted and instructions as to just how they were to be served. President Taft loved to give champagne to his guests. In his four years in the White House I don't remember ever seeing a cocktail served before dinner or brandy and soda or a Scotch and soda after dinner, but there was rarely a big luncheon or dinner when there wasn't champagne. One of his favorite luncheon dishes was terrapin—and he insisted that champagne be served with that. President Taft, however, was a teetotaler.

As a matter of fact, President Taft liked every sort of food—with the single exception of eggs. He really had few preferences but just naturally liked food—and lots of it. For one thing, he was extremely fond of salted almonds.

But his great weakness was for beefsteak at breakfast. He wanted a thick, juicy, twelve-ounce steak nearly every morning. He would get up about seven o'clock and during the first two years he spent in the White House he had a work-out in his bedroom with a physical culture trainer. (I remember

Mrs. Taft saying: "And to think of Will being so silly as to pay that trainer \$1,000 a year for punching him about.")

A little before eight-thirty the President and Mrs. Taft and the family would come down to the private dining-room for breakfast. As a rule he would eat two oranges, a twelve-ounce beefsteak, several pieces of toast and butter and a vast quantity of coffee, with cream and sugar.

In looking through my diaries of this period I find that on November 27th, 1911, I have a note which reads: "The President weighs 332 pounds and tells me with a great laugh that he is going on a diet but that 'things are in a sad state of affairs when a man can't even call his gizzard his own.'"

Then on August 3rd, 1912, I wrote, "The President actually looks as if he weighs 400 pounds," so I know that try as he would his dieting was none too successful while he was in the White House.

I remember the morning when he said to me: "Please, Mrs. Jaffray, I wish you would have the cook give me only a six-ounce steak instead of the regular man-sized one. It's a terrible sentence the doctor has imposed on me."

After that he did get only his six-ounce steaks for breakfast, but somehow he really didn't take off any great amount of weight while he was President.

The Tafts had not been in the White House many months before Mrs. Taft was taken seriously ill. As a matter of fact, she suffered a stroke and it was almost a year before she regained her health. When she was well enough to be propped up in a

chair she would be carried to the window of her bedroom that looked out on the lovely White House gardens and there she would smile down on the garden-parties that she demanded be carried on as usual in spite of her illness.

I don't think I ever saw a man more gentle and affectionate than the President was during Mrs. Taft's sickness. As a result of her stroke Mrs. Taft had to relearn the whole art of speech. I shall never forget the scores of times that I saw him sitting by her side on a sofa, with his hands over hers, saying over and over again: "Now please, darling, try and say 'the'—that's it, 'the.' That's pretty good, but now try it again."

The only other President during the years I was in the White House who compared with him in kindness and thoughtfulness to members of his own family was President Wilson. He, too, saw much White House sickness and he, too, was called upon to exercise endless gentleness and patience.

Since the remodeling of the White House some thirty years ago the personal rooms of the President and of the First Lady have overlooked the gardens in the rear. A beautiful large bedroom with a boudoir and private bath have always been designated as the personal rooms of the President's wife. Off these rooms is a smaller bedroom and dressing-room and bath which are called the President's.

During the days of the Roosevelts there was in Mrs. Roosevelt's bedroom a massive old bed, topped by a great gold crown, that has always been known as the "Lincoln bed." President Roosevelt and Mrs. Roosevelt very proudly used this.

Mrs. Taft did not care for this great "Lincoln

bed" and had it set up in one of the guest-rooms and in its place installed twin beds—the first ones that had ever been in the White House. For the most part President Taft used one of these, but often when particularly tired he would use the bed in his own room.

The history of one of these twin beds is very tragic. On it Mrs. Taft lay for the long months that she was ill. During the next administration the first Mrs. Wilson died in it.

Mrs. Harding used the same bed and for many weeks was ill in it. With the coming of the Coolidges this bed and its mate were sent to the rooms occupied by the Coolidge boys and on it poor little Calvin Coolidge suffered the agonies of blood-poisoning. He was removed from it to die in the Walter Reed Hospital.

Somehow in looking back over all these seventeen years that I lived in the White House I have a feeling of the tremendous amount of sickness that was there. For a whole year Mrs. Taft was desperately ill; the first Mrs. Wilson died there and for a long time during the Wilson administration the White House was one endless sick bay. At the same time that the first Mrs. Wilson was ill, Miss Helen Woodrow Bones, who lived at the White House, and Miss Mary Smith of New Orleans, a house guest, were also sick. Then there was, of course, the year and a half when President Wilson was invalided, and then Mrs. Harding's illness, and then the funeral of President Harding, to be followed a year or two later by the death of Calvin Coolidge, Junior.

It was these things—these common tragedies and

sorrows—that more than anything else made the White House a plain American home.

When I think of President Taft I remember him most vividly as a gentle, kind husband pleading with his wife to try to say simple words for him.

The picture that most often comes to my mind when I think of President Wilson is of a broken-hearted man kneeling by the bedside of his wife begging her to try to eat just a little food.

When I think of President Harding it is of a man too kind and too lenient to the friends he trusted.

So it was that in time the White House became just that—a white house—and these successive Presidents were no longer mighty and unapproachable rulers but old and true friends.

